

THE
Entertaining Museum,
OR
Complete Circulating Library.

VOL. XVIII.

Being the THIRD VOLUME of
THE
ADVENTURES
OF
GIL BLAS of Santillane.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. WENMAN, No. 144, in Fleet-Street,
and sold by the Booksellers, News-Carriers, &c.
in Town and Country.

††† Vol. I. may be perused gratis, and returned
if not approved.—And if any Person in Town or
Country should find any Difficulty in getting supplied
with these Volumes regularly, they are requested to
write or send to Mr. WENMAN, who will punctually
supply their Orders.

This WORK will contain

All such Performances as are particularly calculated for the Amusement, Entertainment, Emolument, and Instruction of the Readers ; especially such as are universally held in Estimation, and have merited the Approbation of the best Judges of literary Merit.

Among other Articles will be introduced, Complete Editions of the most celebrated

HISTORIES,	PERUVIAN,	SENTIMENTAL
NOVELS,	EASTERN,	JOURNIES,
ROMANCES,	AND	WORKS OF HU-
ADVENTURES,	ARABIAN TALES,	MOUR, &c.

As well as the Performances of the best

E S S A Y I S T S ;

S U C H A S

The Adventurer, Rambler, Idler, Connoisseur, and World.

And, to render this Performance still more deserving of the Attention and Encouragement of the Public, elegant Translations will be given of the most celebrated French, Spanish, Italian, and even German Novels, Tales, Histories, Romances, and Adventures.

* * That every Person may be enabled to become a Purchaser of this Work, and gradually become possessed of a most valuable Library, without being sensible of the Expence,

A VOLUME per WEEK will be published,
Price only Six-Pence sewed, or Nine-Pence bound and lettered.

N. B. Vols. I. and II. contain the ADVENTURES of Sir LAUNCELOT GREAVES, by the Author of *Roderic Random* ; and Vols. III. IV. V. &c. contain the whole of the History of TOM JONES.

ted
ent,
as
ted
ary

ete

AL
u-

;

n-

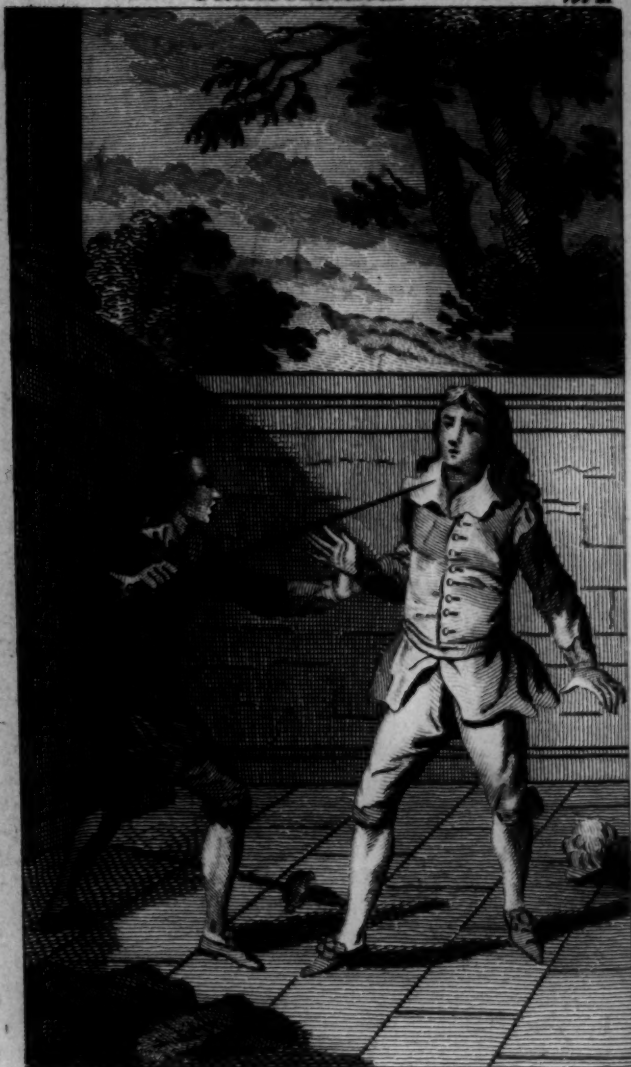
ry-
he
he
en
nd

ne
ne
ng

nd

es
or
c.





Dodd del.

Goldar sculp.

Gil Blas disarmed by the little Secretary.

Published as the Act directs, by I. Wenman, N^o 144, Fleet Street, Oct. 21, 1780.

THE
ADVENTURES
OF
Gil Blas of Santillane.

A NEW TRANSLATION,

By T. SMOLLETT, M. D.

AUTHOR OF RODERICK RANDOM.

V O L. III.

L O N D O N :

Printed for JOSEPH WENMAN,
No. 144, FLEET-STREET.

M.DCC.LXXX.



THE
ADVENTURES
OF

GIL BLAS of Santillane.

[Continuation of BOOK III. CHAP. XI.]

PEDRO de Moya retired, without speaking, but sensibly touched, as I perceived, with his reception; and I believe that, in the bitterness of his resentment, he did not fail to curse, within himself, the players, as they deserved; and they, when he was gone, began to speak of authors with great respect. "Signior Pedro de Moya (said Florimonda) did not seem to go away very well satisfied."

"Pshaw, madam, (cried Rosimiro) don't disturb yourself about that: authors are not worth notice; if we should treat them on an equal footing, it would spoil them. I know these sorry gentlemen; they would soon forget themselves. Let us, therefore, use them like slaves; and we need not fear that we shall tire their patience: for though their displeasure may detach them from us sometimes, the fury of writing will bring them back, and they will think themselves very happy, provided we deign to act their performances."

"You are in the right, (said Arsenia) we only lose those authors whose fortunes we have made: for as soon as we have procured a good settlement for them, idleness takes possession of them, and they work no

more. Luckily the company don't break their hearts, and the public is no loser by their sloth."

These fine observations were much applauded, and it was determined, that authors, notwithstanding the ill treatment they receive, owed their all to the players, who therefore claimed the superiority over them; and certes they could not despise them more.

C H A P. XII.

Gil Blas acquires the theatrical taste, abandons himself to the pleasures of a comic life, with which however, he is disgusted in a little time.

THE company remained at table until the hour arrived of going to the theatre, whither they repaired in a body. I followed, and once more saw the play, which gave me such pleasure, that I resolved to take the same opportunity every day. In this I did not fail, and insensibly became reconciled to the actors; such is the force of custom: I was particularly charmed with those who ranted and distorted themselves most upon the stage; and was not at all singular in this way of thinking.

The beauty of the performance touched me no less than the manner of representation: I was quite transported with some of them; and among the rest was prodigiously fond of those where all the cardinals, or the twelve peers of France appeared. I remember that, in two days, I got by heart a whole comedy, entitled, "The Queen of Flowers." The Rose, who was queen, had the violet for a confidante, and the Jessamine for her usher. I thought nothing could be more ingenious than these works, which I imagined, did a great deal of honour to the taste of our nation.

I not only adorned my memory with the brightest passages from these dramatic master-pieces; I set about bringing my taste to perfection; which to accomplish I listened with a greedy attention to all that the players said. If they praised any performance I esteemed

it;

it; and whatsoever met with their disapprobation, was immediately despised by me. I thought they were as skilful in plays as jewellers are in diamonds. Nevertheless, Pedro de Moya's tragedy had great success, although they had prognosticated its damnation. But even this could not make me suspect their judgment; and I chose rather to believe that the public wanted common sense, than to doubt of the company's infallibility. I was assured, however, from all quarters, that those new pieces of which the players had no good opinion, were usually very much applauded; and that on the contrary, those which they received with approbation, were commonly hissed by the audience. I was told, that it was a maxim with them, to judge erroneously of the works that were presented to them, and was informed of a thousand instances where the success belied their determination; but all these proofs were scarce sufficient to disabuse my understanding.

I shall never forget what happened one day, in the first representation of a new comedy, which the players had pronounced cold and tedious, and actually thought unpassable. In these sentiments they performed the first act, that met with great applause, which quite astonished them. The second act was played and still better received than the first; upon which the actors were confounded. "How the devil (said Rosimiro) is it possible that this comedy should take?" At last they acted the third, which gave more pleasure than the two former. "I can't comprehend the meaning of this (said Ricardo) we imagined that this piece would not please—yet every body is charmed with it!" "Gentlemen (said one of them very plainly) the reason is, because there are a thousand strokes of wit in the performance, which we have not observed."

I no longer, therefore, looked upon the players as excellent judges, but became a just appraiser of their merit: and, indeed, they justified to a title, all the

ridicule they met with from the world ; for some of the actors and actresses were giddy with applause : and, considering themselves as objects of admiration, thought they bestowed a favour on the public when they deigned to play. I was shocked at their faults, but, unhappily, too well pleased with their way of life, so that I plunged into debauchery. How could it be otherwise ? Their conversation was pernicious to youth, and all I saw contributed to corrupt my morals : had I been ignorant of what passed at the houses of Casilda, Constanca, and the other players, that of Arsenia alone was but too capable of undoing me ; for, besides the old noblemen I mentioned, there came thither beaux, young heirs, whom usurers enabled to spend money, and sometimes also farmers of the revenue were admitted, who, far from being gratified for their presence, as they are in their own assemblies, were obliged to pay through the nose for their reception.

Florimonda, who lived hard by, dined and supped every day with my mistress ; and people were surprized at the friendship that seemed to unite them. It afforded matter of astonishment to see coquettes live together in such good intelligence ; and every body imagined that, soon or late, they would quarrel about some gallant. But the world was very much mistaken in these perfect friends, who were joined by the most solid affection. Instead of being jealous of one another, like other women, they lived in common ; and chose rather to share the spoils, than foolishly dispute about the inclinations of the men.

Laura, by the examples of these illustrious associates, made the best of her youth too : and it was not without reason she had told me that I should see strange things : however, I affected to be quite easy : because I had promised to adopt the unconcern of a player on such occasions : and thus I dissembled for some days, contenting myself with asking the names of the men with whom I found her particularly engaged.

gaged. She always answered it was an uncle or cousin. Heavens, what a croud of relations she had! Sure, her family was more numerous than that of king Priam: and the jade did not even confine herself to her uncles and cousins; but also went abroad frequently in order to allure strangers, by acting the widow of quality at the house of the old woman whom I mentioned before. In short, Laura (to give the reader a just and precise idea of her) was as young, as handsome, and as much a coquette as her mistress, who had no other advantage over her than that of diverting the town in public. I was borne down by the torrent for three weeks, during which, I gave myself up to all manner of debauchery: but at the same time, I must observe, in the midst of my pleasures, I was frequently seized with sentiments of remorse that proceeded from my education, and embittered all my enjoyments. Vice could not get the better of these warnings, which augmented in proportion as I became more debauched; and by the effect of a happy disposition, I began to abhor the disorders of a theatrical life. "Ah, wretch! (said I to myself) is it thus thou fulfillest the expectation of thy family? Was it not enough to cheat it by chusing another employment than that of a tutor? Does thy servile condition hinder thee from living like an honest man! or does it become thee to live among such sinners? some of whom are possessed by envy, rage, and avarice; while others have banished all sense of shame. These are abandoned to intemperance and sloth; and those indulge their pride even to an excess of insolence. I am resolved: and will no longer dwell with the seven deadly sins."

B O O K IV.

C H A P. I.

Gil Blas being disgusted at the irregularities of the actresses, quits the service of Arsenia, and goes into a more creditable family.

A REMNANT of honour and religion, which I did not fail to preserve amidst such corruption of morals, made me resolve not only to leave Arsenia, but also to break off all correspondence with Laura, whom, however, I could not help loving, though I was sensible of her flagrant infidelity. Happy is he who can thus profit by those moments of reflection that interrupt the pleasures which engross his attention! Early one morning, I bundled up my cloaths, and without clearing with Arsenia, who was, indeed, little or nothing in my debt; or taking leave of my dear Laura, I quitted the house where I had breathed nothing but the air of debauchery; and I had no sooner performed such a good action, than heaven rewarded me for it, by throwing me in the way of the steward of Don Matthias, my late master. Having saluted him, he knew me, and stopt to enquire if I was in any service; to which I answered, that I had been about a minute or two out of place: for that after having lived about a month with Arsenia, whose behaviour I did not like, I had left her of my own accord, in order to preserve my innocence. The steward, as if he had been scrupulously religious, approved of my delicacy, and told me, that since I was a young man of such honour, he would make it his business to settle me in an advantageous place. He performed his promise, and that very day introduced me into the service of Don Vincent de Guzman, whose manager was one of his acquaintance.

I could

I could not have got into a better family, and therefore had no cause to be displeased with my situation in the sequel. Don Vincent was a very rich old nobleman, who had lived many years without law-suit or wife; the physicians having deprived him of his spouse, by endeavouring to free her of a cough, which she might have preserved much longer had she abstained from their prescriptions. Instead of marrying again, he had applied himself wholly to the education of Aurora, his only daughter, who was then going in her six and twentieth year, and justly passed for an accomplished young lady: for, with an uncommon share of beauty, she had an excellent genius, perfectly well cultivated. Her father, tho' he was no conjurer, possessed the happy talent of managing his affairs to the best advantage; but had one fault, which however, is pardonable in old men. He delighted in talking, and above all things, of war and bloodshed. If any body was so unfortunate as to touch that string in his presence, he instantly set the trumpet to his mouth; and the hearers were very happy if they got off for the relation of two sieges and three battles. As he had spent two thirds of his life in the army, his memory was an inexhaustible source of different actions, which were not always listened to with the same pleasure that he felt in recounting them. Besides, he stammered in his speech, and was very prolix, which rendered his manner of relating very disagreeable: otherwise, I never knew a nobleman of a better character. He had a great deal of equanimity, and was neither passionate nor whimsical; a circumstance which I admired very much in a man of quality. Though he was a good œconomist, he kept an honourable house, his domestics consisting of several footmen, and three women, who waited on Aurora. I soon perceived that the steward of Don Matthias, had procured a good post for me, and bent all my endeavours to maintain myself in it; for this purpose, I began by reconnoitring the ground; that is, studying the differ-

ent humours of every body in the family; then regulating my conduct by the observations I made, it was not long before I acquired the good-will of my master, and all his servants.

When I had been about a month in Don Vincent's family, I thought I perceived that his daughter distinguished me from all the rest of the valets in the house. Always, when her eyes were fixed upon me, I remarked a sort of complaisance in her countenance, which I could not observe when she looked at my fellows. Had I not lived among beaux and players, it would never have come into my head to imagine that Aurora could think of me; but I was a good deal spoiled among these gentlemen, who are seldom extremely delicate in their sentiments of the most virtuous ladies. "If (said I to myself) we may believe those stage-players, they are sometimes benefited by the whims to which women of quality are subject: and how do I know that my mistress is free from such caprice?—No (added I) I cannot believe it! she is not one of those Messalinas, who, belying the pride of their birth, humble their affections so unworthily, even to the dust, and dishonour themselves without blushing: but rather, one of those virtuous, though tender, young ladies, who satisfied with the bounds prescribed by honour to their inclinations, make no scruple of inspiring, as well as of entertaining a delicate passion, which yields amusement without danger.

These were my sentiments of my mistress, though I did not know precisely how to interpret her behaviour. In the mean time, as often as she saw me, she did not fail to smile, and express joy in her countenance; so that, without passing for a fool, any man might have been ensnared by such fair appearances: I therefore could resist them no longer; but concluded, that Aurora was strongly captivated with my merit; and looked upon myself as one of those happy domestics whose service is sweetened by love. That I might appear, in some measure, less unworthy of the
favour

favour which my good fortune had procured for me, I began to take more care of my person than I had ever done before: I spent all the money I had in linen, essences and pomatums: the first thing I did of a morning was to dress and perfume myself, that I might not appear in dishabille before my mistress; and with this attention to my exteriors, and other airs I assumed, in order to please, I flattered myself that my happiness was not far off.

Among Aurora's women there was one called Ortiz, an old gentlewoman who had lived more than twenty years in the family, and nursed Don Vincent's daughter, whom she still served in quality of duenna, though she no longer performed the disagreeable part of that function: but on the contrary, instead of discovering as formerly, the actions of Aurora, her sole business now was to conceal them. One evening, Dame Ortiz, having found an opportunity of speaking to me without being overheard, told me softly, that if I was wise and discreet, I would be in the garden at midnight, where I should be informed of things which I would not be sorry to hear. I answered, squeezing the duenna's hand, that I would not fail to be there; and we parted immediately for fear of being surprized. Heavens! how did the time hang on my hands, from that instant to supper (which in our family was always over in good time) and from thence to my master's going to bed! Every thing seemed to drag on with extraordinary slowness; and to crown my chagrin, when Don Vincent retired to his bed-chamber, instead of going to rest, he began to fight over again, all his campaigns in Portugal, with which he had so often stunned me before. But one thing which he had never done hitherto, and reserved for this evening, was to tell me the names of all the officers who had distinguished themselves in his time, and even to recount their exploits. What did I suffer in hearing him to an end! he left off speaking, however, a last, and got into bed. Upon which, I went into the little closet where

where I slept, from whence there was a passage by a pair of back stairs, into the garden, and anointed my whole body with essence; I then put on a clean shirt strongly perfumed, and having neglected nothing which I thought might flatter the passion of my mistress, went directly to the place of assignation.

Not finding Ortiz there, I concluded, that tired with waiting for me, she had returned to her apartment, and that the happy minute was past. I blamed Don Vincent for it, and as I was cursing his campaigns, heard it strike ten. This made me believe that the clock went wrong, for I was persuaded that it was at least an hour past midnight, but I was so happily mistaken, that a good quarter of an hour after this, I heard another clock strike ten again. "Very well (said I to myself) I have but two whole hours to dance attendance, and they shall have no cause to complain of my punctuality. What must we do till twelve? Let us take a turn in the garden, and consider the part I am to play, which is a pretty new one to me who am but a novice in the whims of women of quality. I know well enough how to behave with Abigails and actresses; these you accost with a familiar air, and come to the point without ceremony: but we must go another way to work with ladies of fashion: the gallant I imagine, must be polite, complaisant, tender, and respectful, tho' not timorous; instead of endeavouring to hasten his own happiness, by the violence of his transports, he ought to lie in wait for the moment of frailty."

These were my reflections, and this the conduct I proposed to observe with Aurora; representing to myself that in a little time, I should have the pleasure of seeing myself at her feet, and of saying a thousand passionate things to that amiable object. I even recollected all the passages of our theatrical pieces which might be of service to me, and do me honour during our interview; and by a seasonable application of these, I hoped, after the example of some players

whom

whom I knew, to pass for a wit, though I could only boast of a memory. Absorpt in these reflections, which amused my impatience more agreeably than the military stories of my master, I heard the clock strike eleven; upon which I plunged again into my reverie, sometimes walking, and sometimes sitting in an arbor at the further end of the garden. The long expected hour of twelve at last struck, and in a few minutes, Ortiz, as punctual, though less impatient than I, appeared. "Signior Gil Blas, said she, accosting me, how long have you been here?" I replied two hours. "In good sooth, said she laughing, you are very exact: it is a pleasure to make an assignation with you. True indeed, continued she, with a serious air, you cannot pay too dear for the happy tidings I have to tell you. My mistress wants to have some private conversation with you. I will say no more. The rest is a secret you must learn from her own mouth. Follow me, and I will conduct you into her apartment." So saying, the duenna took me by the hand, and led me in a mysterious manner, through a little door, of which she had the key, into the chamber of her mistress.

C H A P. II.

The reception that Gil Blas met with from Aurora, and the conversation that passed between them.

I Saluted Aurora, whom I found in dishabille, in the most respectful manner, and with the best grace I could put on; and she received me with a smiling air, forced me to sit down by her, and bade her ambassadess retire into another room. After this prelude, with which I was not ill pleased, she addressed herself to me in these words. "Gil Blas, you must have perceived that I look upon you in a favourable light, and distinguish you from the rest of my father's servants; and even though you may not have observed, by my looks, that I have a regard for you, the
step

step I have taken this night will leave you no room to doubt it."

I gave her no time to proceed, but believing that I ought, as a polite gentleman, to spare her modesty the pain of a more formal explanation, I started up in a transport, and throwing myself at her feet, like a stage hero, who falls on his knees before his princess, cried in a theatrical tone, "Ah madam! can it be possible that Gil Blas, hitherto the foot-ball of fortune, and out cast of nature, is so happy as to have inspired you with sentiments"—"Don't speak so loud, said my mistress laughing, you will awaken my women, who are asleep in the next room. Get up, take your seat again, and hear me to an end, without interrupting me. Yes, Gil Blas, continued she, resuming her gravity, I am your well-wisher; and, as a proof of my esteem, will impart to you a secret, on which the repose of my life depends: I am in love with a young gentleman of beauty, fortune, and illustrious birth: his name is Don Lewis Pacheco; and although I have seen him several times in the Prado, and at public shews, I have never spoke to him, am even ignorant of his character, and don't know but he may be a person of bad morals. This is what I want to be informed of; and having occasion for a man to enquire carefully about his reputation, and bring me a faithful account of it, I make choice of you, and believe I run no risk, by intrusting you with this commission, in which, I hope you will acquit yourself with so much discretion and address, that I shall never repent of having made you my confidant."

Here my mistress left off speaking, in order to know what answer I would make; and I, though at first disconcerted at being so disagreeably undeceived, quickly recollected myself, and surmounting that shame which is always the concomitant of unsuccessful rashness, expressed so much zeal for the lady's interests, and devoted myself with so much ardor to her service, that, though she might still continue to think

think that I had foolishly flattered myself with having made an impression on her heart, she saw very well that I knew how to make amends for my folly. I asked but two days to bring her an account of Don Lewis; after which Dame Ortiz being called in by her mistress, conducted me back into the garden, and left me there, after having said, "Good night, Gil Blas, I know your punctuality so well that I need not recommend it to you to be early at the next assignation."

I returned to my chamber, not without some vexation to find my expectation baulked: nevertheless, I was wise enough to reflect, that it became me better to be the confidant than the lover of my mistress. I considered too, that this might turn out to my advantage, as the messengers of love are usually well paid for their trouble; and I went to bed, in a full resolution to perform what Aurora desired. With this view I went abroad next day, and found no difficulty in learning the place of abode of such a noted cavalier as Don Lewis. I inquired into his character in the neighbourhood; but those to whom I applied could not fully satisfy my curiosity. This made me repeat my enquiries the following day, when I was more successful. Meeting by accident in the street a young man of my acquaintance, we stopt to chat a little, and, that very instant, a friend of his happening to pass, made up to us, and told his comrade that he had been just turned away by Don Pacheco, the father of Don Lewis, on suspicion of having drank a cask of wine belonging to his master. I did not lose such a fair opportunity of being informed of every thing I wanted to know, and succeeded so well by the questions I asked, that I went home very well satisfied that I was able to keep my word with my mistress. I was to see her again the next night, at the same hour, and in the same manner as at first; but I did not suffer so much disquiet that night, and far from hearing the conversation of my old master with
unpa-

impatience, I introduced the subject of his campaign, waited for twelve with the utmost tranquillity, and it was not until I had heard the hour repeated by several clocks that I went down into the garden, void of essence and perfumes, resolved for the future to retrench that extravagance.

I found the most trusty duenna at the rendezvous, and she upbraided me in a satirical manner for having abated in my diligence. I made no answer, but let her conduct me into the apartment of Aurora, who, as soon as I appeared, asked if I had got good intelligence of Don Lewis. "Yes, Madam, said I, and you shall hear it in two words. In the first place I must tell you, that he will set out very soon on his return to Salamanca, in order to finish his studies. He is a young cavalier of honour and probity, and, being a gentleman and Castilian, his courage is not to be doubted; he has besides, a great deal of wit, and his behaviour is very agreeable: but that which, perhaps you will least like in him, is a disposition, too much a kin to that of most of our young noblemen, extremely rakish. You must know that, young as he is, he has already had two actresses in keeping." "Is it possible! cried Aurora: heavens! what morals! but are you certain, Gil Blas, that he leads such a licentious life?" "Oh! don't at all doubt it, madam," I replied; I was informed by a valet, who was turned out of his service this morning; and servants are commonly very sincere, when they talk of their masters faults: besides, he keeps company with Don Alexo Segiar, Don Antonio Centelles, and Don Fernando de Gamboa; and that, alone, is a sufficient demonstration of his libertinism." "Enough, Gil Blas," said my mistress sighing, on the credit of your report. I will combat my unworthy passion, which, though it has already taken deep root in my heart, I don't despair to overcome. Go, added she, giving me a little purse well replenished, there's something for your trouble

tro
ber
per
tes
dre
pur
me
me
she
pie
ted
tru
for
que
to r
ind
and

The
V
S
been
difer
fatal
fame
then
Oqu
atter
bod
elfe
And

*
ped

trouble; beware of disclosing my secret, and remember that I depend upon your silence.

I assured my mistress, that she might make herself perfectly easy on that score, for I was the Harpocrates* of trusty valets. After this assurance, I withdrew, very impatient to know the contents of my purse; in which I found twenty pistoles. This made me believe, that Aurora would have certainly given me more, had I brought her agreeable tidings, since she paid me so handsomely for such a mortifying piece of news: and I repented that I had not imitated the lawyers, who sometimes put a gloss upon the truth, in the practice of their profession; I was sorry for having nipt in the bud an intrigue, the consequence of which might have been very advantageous to me: however, I had the consolation to see myself indemnified for my unseasonable expence in essences and perfumes.

C H A P. III.

The great change that happened in the family of Don Vincent, and the strange resolution with which love inspired the fair Aurora.

SOON after this adventure, Signior Don Vincent happened to fall sick; and though he had not been in such an advanced age, the symptoms of his disease were so violent, that we had reason to fear a fatal issue. When he was first seized, two of the most famous physicians of Madrid were sent for. One of them was called doctor Andros, and the other doctor Oquetos, who having examined the patient with great attention, were of opinion, that the humours of his body were in a state of fermentation: but in nothing else could they agree. "We must make haste, (said Andros) and purge off the humours, though they be crude

* Harpocrates, among the ancients, was worshipped as the god of silence.

crude, while they continue in this violent agitation of flux and reflux, lest they settle upon some noble part." Oquetos, on the contrary, maintained, that they ought to wait for the concoction of the humours, before they should employ a cathartic. "But your method (resumed the first) is directly opposite to that of the prince of medicine: Hippocrates orders cathartics in the very first days of the most ardent fever, and says, in express terms, that we must be ready to purge, when the humours are in the orgasm; that is to say, in a state of fermentation." "O! there you are mistaken, (replied Oquetos) Hippocrates, by the word orgasm, does not understand the fermentation, but the concoction of the humours."

Upon this, the doctors grew passionate: one repeated the Greek text, and quoted all those authors, who had explained it in his way: the other, relying on a Latin translation, pronounced it in a tone still more vociferous. Which of them was in the right? Don Vincent was not the man to decide that question; but seeing himself obliged to chuse, bestowed his confidence on him who had dispatched the greatest number of patients; I mean the eldest of the two. Andros, therefore, who was the younger, withdrew, not without darting some strokes of raillery at his senior, on his interpretation of the word orgasm. Oquetos, who remained triumphant, being a man of doctor Sangrado's principles, began by ordering his patient to be copiously bled, deferring his cathartic until the humours should be concocted: but death, who, without doubt, was afraid the purgation so sagely delayed, would deprive him of his prey, prevented the concoction, and carried my master off. Such was the end of Signior Don Vincent, who lost his life, because his physician did not understand Greek.

Aurora having celebrated her father's funerals, in a manner suitable to his birth, took possession of his estate, and, being now mistress of herself, dismissed some of the domestics, with rewards proportioned to

their

their several services, and, in a little time, retired to a castle, which she had on the banks of the Tagus, between Sacedon and Buendia. I was not only one of those whom she retained, and carried to the country with her, but also had the good fortune to become a necessary person. Notwithstanding the faithful report I had made to her of Don Lewis, she was still in love with that cavalier; or rather, finding herself unable to conquer her passion, she had abandoned herself entirely to it; and being no longer under a necessity of taking precautions to speak with me in private, "Gil Blas, (said she, sighing) I cannot forget Don Lewis: in spite of all my efforts to banish him from my thoughts, he is still present in my imagination: not such as thou hast painted him, plunged in all sorts of debauch; but such as I would have him to be, tender, amorous and constant." So saying, she began to melt, and could not help shedding some tears; which affected me so much, that I could scarce refrain from weeping also: I could not make my court to her more effectually, than by sympathizing with her sorrow. "I see thou hast a very tender disposition, my friend (added she, after having dried her fair eyes), and I am so well satisfied with thy zeal, that thou may'st depend upon being well recompenced. Dear Gil Blas, I have more occasion now than ever for thy assistance. I will disclose to thee a design which at present engrosses me, and which thou wilt (no doubt) pronounce very capricious. Know, that I intend to set out immediately for Salamanca, where I will disguise myself like a cavalier, and, under the name of Don Felix, get acquainted with Pacheco, whose confidence and friendship I will endeavour to acquire: I will often speak to him of Aurora de Guzman, and call myself her cousin; by which means, we will, perhaps, express a desire to see her; and when my expectation will be answered. We will have two different lodgings at Salamanca, in one of which I will pass for Don Felix, in the other for Aurora, and

pre-

presenting myself to the eyes of Don Lewis, sometimes metamorphosed into a man, and sometimes in my own dress, I flatter myself, that I shall, by degrees, accomplish my purpose. I grant (added she) that this an extravagant scheme; but I am hurried away by my passion, and the innocence of my intention makes me insensible of the risk I must run."

I was very much of Aurora's opinion, with regard to the nature of her design: nevertheless, how imprudent soever I judged it, I took care not to act the pedagogue; but, on the contrary, began to gild the pill, and undertook to prove, that this mad project was no more than an agreeable frolic that could have no bad consequence. My mistress was pleased with this construction; for lovers are charmed with flattery, even in their most extravagant fancies. We now, therefore, looked upon this rash enterprize in no other light than that of a comedy, the skilful representation of which it is my business to concert. Having chosen our actors from the servants of the family; the parts were distributed, without the least quarrel or disturbance: because we were not players by profession. It was resolved that Dame Ortiz should act the part of Aurora's aunt, under the name of Donna Kimena de Guzman, attended by a valet and waiting-woman; and that Aurora, dressed like a cavalier, should entertain me as a valet de chambre, together with one of her own maids, in the disguise of a page, to be always about her person. The characters being thus regulated, we returned to Madrid, where we understood Don Lewis still was, but that it would not be long before he would set out for Salamanca upon which we ordered the necessary dresses to be made with all diligence; and when they were finished, my mistress caused them to be conveniently packed up, until we should find a proper time and place for putting them on. Then leaving the care of her house to the steward, she set out in a coach drawn by four mules, and took the road to the king-

dom of Leon, with all those of her servants, who had parts to act in her performance.

We had already crossed Old Castile, when the axletree of the coach gave way, between Avila and Villafior, about three or four hundred paces from a castle, which we perceived at the foot of a mountain. As night approached we were not a little embarrassed, when a peasant passing by accident, rid us of our anxiety by telling us that the castle which we saw belonged to Donna Elvira, widow of Don Pedro de Pinares, a lady whose character he extolled so much, that my mistress sent me to the castle to beg a lodging for one night. Elvira did not belie the countryman's report, but received me with great affability, and favoured Aurora's compliments with such an answer as she desired. We repaired immediately to the castle, whither our coach was dragged slowly by our mules, and at the gate met Don Pedro's widow, who came out to receive my mistress. I will pass over in silence the civil things that were said on both sides on this occasion, and only observe, that Elvira was a lady pretty much advanced in years, but very polite, and understood how to perform the duties of hospitality as well as any woman in the world. She conducted Aurora into a sumptuous apartment, where leaving her to repose a few moments, she came and employed her attention on the most minute things that concerned us. Afterwards when supper was ready she ordered the cloth to be laid in Aurora's chamber, where they sat down together at table. Don Pedro's widow was not one of those people who cloud the honour of their entertainments with a pensive and discontented air: she was of a gay disposition, and supported the conversation in an agreeable manner; expressing herself with great dignity and elegance. I admired her understanding, and the delicate turn of her thoughts, which seemed to charm Aurora as well as me. They conceived a friendship for one another, and promised

raised to maintain a correspondence by letters. Our coach could not be refitted till the following day, and as we should run some risk by setting out late, it was determined that we should stay at the castle another night. We, in our turn, were served with a profusion of victuals, and our beds were no less comfortable than our meal.

Next day my mistress found new charms in the conversation of Elvira, with whom she dined in a large hall, adorned with several pictures; one of which was remarkable for the beauty and wonderful expression of the figures, though it presented a very tragical scene to the view. A dead cavalier appeared lying on his back, and drowned in his own blood, but seemed still to retain a menacing air, even in death. Near him lay a young lady in another attitude, stretched also upon the ground; a sword was seen plunged in her bosom, and she breathed her last sighs, and fixing her dying eyes upon a young man who seemed mortally grieved at the loss of her. The painter had likewise drawn another figure which did not escape my attention: this was an old man of a good mien, who, strongly affected with the objects that struck his view, discovered as much sensibility as the youth. One would have thought that each of them felt the same pangs, at sight of these doleful images, but that each received the impression in a different manner. The old man seemed overwhelmed with the profound sorrow in which he was plunged; but there was fury mixed with the affliction of the youth. The painter had expressed the whole with such strength, that we could scarce withdraw our eyes from the performance. My mistress having asked what story the picture represented; Madam, said Elvira, it is a faithful representation of the misfortunes of my family." This answer excited the curiosity of Aurora, who expressed such an eager inclination to know more, that Don Pedro's widow could not dispense with promising her the satisfaction she desired.

desired. This promise, which was made before Ortiz, her two companions and me detained us all four in the hall after dinner. My mistress would have sent us away, but Elvira perceiving that we longed fervently to hear the explanation of the picture, had the goodness to bid us stay, saying that the story which she was going to relate was none that required secrecy; and immediately began in these words.

C H A P. IV.

*The baleful marriage. A novel *.*

ROGER, king of Sicily, had a brother and a sister: the first, called Mainfroy, revolted against him, and lighted up a dangerous and bloody war in the kingdom; but had the misfortune to lose two battles, and fall into the hands of the king, who contented himself with punishing his rebellion by depriving him of his liberty. This clemency served only to make Roger pass for a barbarian, in the opinion of one part of his subjects, who said he had only saved his brother's life, in order to exercise upon him a slow and inhuman revenge. But all the rest, with more foundation, imputed the harsh treatment that Mainfroy suffered in prison to his sister Mathilda alone: for she had, in effect, always hated the prince, and did not cease persecuting him as long as he lived: but she died soon after him, and her death was looked upon as a just punishment of her unnatural disposition.

Mainfroy having left two sons, as yet in their infancy, Roger wished to get rid of them, fearing that when they should arrive at a more advanced age, the desire of revenging their father would induce them to revive a faction which was not so much quelled but that it might occasion new troubles in the state.

* This novel is a true story, on which the late Mr. Thomson has founded his tragedy of Tancred and Sigismunda.

He imparted his design to the senator Leontio Siffredi, his minister, who, to divert him from putting it in execution, undertook the education of prince Henriquez, the eldest, and advised him to commit the youngest, who was called Don Pedro, to the care of the constable of Sicily. Roger, persuaded that his nephews would be brought up by these men in that submission and duty which they owed to him, left the princes to their conduct, and took upon himself the care of his niece Constantia, who was of the same age with Henriquez, and only daughter of the princess Mathilda; he furnished her with women and masters, and spared nothing in her education.

Leontio Siffredi had a castle two short leagues from Palermo, at a place called Belmont; and there that minister employed himself in rendering Henriquez worthy of mounting one day, the throne of Sicily. He soon observed in that prince such amiable qualities, that he applied himself to the cultivation of them, as closely as if he had had no children of his own. He was blessed, however, with two daughters; the eldest of whom, called Blanch, younger by a year than the prince, was adorned with the most perfect beauty: the other, named Porcia, whose birth occasioned her mother's death, was still in the cradle. Blanch and prince Henriquez, as soon as they were capable of love, entertained a mutual passion, though they had not the liberty of conversing in private. The prince, however, did not fail to find opportunities some times; and knew so well how to profit by those precious moments, that he engaged the daughter of Siffredi to allow him to execute a project he had formed. Just about this time, it happened that Leontio was obliged by the king's orders, to make a journey into one of the most remote provinces of the island: and, during his absence, Henriquez caused an opening to be made in the wall of his apartment, that was contiguous to the chamber of Blanch; supplying it with a sliding partition of wood, that opened

ed and shut, without being perceived ; because it was so closely joined to the cieling, that the eye could not discover the artifice. A skilful architect, whom the prince had made his friend, performed the work with equal diligence and secrecy.

Through this passage, the amorous Henriquez introduced himself sometimes into the chamber of his mistress : but he did not abuse her favour ; for tho' she was imprudent enough to allow him a private entrance into her apartment, she did not condescend so far, until he had assured her that he would never ask any thing that innocence could not grant. One night he found her very uneasy, because she had heard that Roger was very ill, and had sent for Siffredi, as high-chancellor of the kingdom, in order to entrust him with his last will. She represented to herself already, her dear Henriquez on the throne, and being afraid of losing him in that high station, was under the utmost anxiety ; and the tears stood in her eyes when he appeared. "Heavens! you weep, madam ; what must I think of that sorrow with which I see you overwhelmed?" "Sir, replied Blanch, I cannot conceal my alarms : the king your uncle will soon cease to live, and you will succeed him. When I therefore foresee how far your new greatness will remove you from me, I own I cannot be unconcerned. A monarch seldom beholds things with a lover's eye, and that which was his utmost ambition while he was a subject, affects him but slightly when he is on the throne. Whether it be an unhappy presage, or reason only that inspires me, I feel my soul agitated with emotions that all my confidence in your goodness cannot assuage ; and though I dare not doubt your generosity, I cannot help distrusting my own destiny." "Adorable Blanch! replied the prince, your fears are obliging, and justify my attachment to your charms : but the excess of your doubts injures my love, and, if I may be allowed to say so, the esteem which you owe me. No! think not that my

destiny and yours can ever be separated. Believe rather, that you will always be the object of my happiness and joy. Lay aside your fear, therefore, and let it not disturb such endearing moments." "Ah, Sir! answered the daughter of Leontio, as soon as you are crowned, your subjects, perhaps, will demand for your queen a princess descended from a long race of kings, whose splendid nuptials may add new realms to yours; and perhaps, alas! you will answer their expectation, even at the expence of your inclination." "Ha! why, replied Henriquez, with some warmth, why are you thus prone to torment yourself, by raising such an afflicting image of what will never happen? Should heaven dispose of the king, my uncle, and make me master of Sicily, I swear that I will espouse you in Palermo, in presence of all my court, and I invoke all that is sacred to confirm my oath."

Siffredi's daughter was cheered by the protestations of Henriquez, and the rest of their conversation turned on the king's distemper: on which occasion Henriquez discovered the goodness of his heart, in lamenting his uncle's fate, with which he had no great reason to be affected: the force of blood making him regret a prince, by whose death he should acquire a crown. Blanch, as yet, did not know all the misfortunes that threatened her. The constable of Sicily had met her coming out of her father's apartment, one day when he was at the castle of Belmont, on some important affairs, was captivated with her beauty, and next day demanded her in marriage of Siffredi, who consented to the match; but Roger's distemper intervening, the nuptials were deferred, and Blanch knew nothing of the matter.

One morning, just as Henriquez had done dressing, he was surprized to see Leontio, followed by Blanch, come into his apartment. "Sir, said that minister to him, the news I bring are afflicting, but the consolation with which they are attended ought to moderate

derate your grief. The king, your uncle, is dead, after having left you heir to his sceptre, and Sicily is subject to your sway. The grandees of the realm, who attend your orders at Palermo, have commissioned me to receive them from your mouth : and I am come, Sir, with my daughter, the first of your new subjects, to offer our early and sincere homage." The prince, who knew very well that Roger had laboured two months under a disease that gradually consumed him, was not much surprized at this piece of news ; nevertheless, struck with the sudden change of his condition, he felt a thousand confused emotions rise within his breast ; and having mused some time, broke silence, by addressing himself to Leontio, in these words : " Sage Siffredi, I shall always look upon you as my father, glory in regulating my conduct by your counsel, and you shall be as much king in Sicily as I am." So saying, he advanced to a table, on which there was a standish, and taking a sheet of paper, wrote his name at the bottom of the page. " What are you about to do, Sir," said Siffredi to him. " I am going to manifest my gratitude and esteem," answered Henriquez, presenting the sheet to Blanch, and saying, " Receive, madam, this pledge of my faith, and of the empire over my inclinations which I now yield to you." Blanch took it, blushing, and made this answer to the prince : " I receive with respect the favours of my king ; but I depend upon a father ; and I hope your majesty will not take it ill that I deposit this paper in his hands, to be used as his prudence shall direct him."

She accordingly gave the subscription of Henriquez to her father, who then observed what till that moment had escaped his penetration. He discerned the prince's sentiments, and said to him, " Your majesty shall have no cause to reproach me ; for I will not abuse the confidence"—" My dear Leontio ! cried Henriquez, interrupting him, don't imagine you can abuse it. Whatever use you shall make of the paper,

I will approve of your determination. But go, added he, return to Palermo, order the preparations to be made for my coronation, and tell my subjects, that I will follow you immediately thither, in order to receive their oaths of allegiance, and assure them of my affection. The minister obeyed his new master's orders, and with his daughter set out for Palermo.

A few hours after their departure, the prince took the same road, more engrossed by his love than by the high rank to which he was raised. As soon as he arrived in the city, he was saluted with innumerable shouts of joy, and amidst the acclamations of his people entered the palace, where every thing was already prepared for the ceremony, and where he found the princess Constantia in deep mourning, and to all appearance very much affected with Roger's death. As they owed one another a mutual compliment of condolence on the event, they both acquitted themselves very handsomely; but it was more cold on the side of Henriquez, than on that of Constance, who, in spite of the enmity subsisting between their families, could not hate the prince. He placed himself on the throne, and the princess sat on his right hand, in an elbow chair not quite so high. The grandees of the kingdom took their places, each according to his rank: the ceremony began, and Leontio, as high-chancellor of the state, and keeper of the late king's will, opened and read it with an audible voice. This deed contained in substance, that Roger, seeing himself without issue, named the eldest son of Mainfroy for his successor, on condition that he should espouse the princess Constance; which, if he refused to perform, he should forfeit the crown of Sicily to the infant Don Pedro, his brother, who should enjoy it on the same terms.

Henriquez was confounded at these words! the restriction gave him incredible pain, which became still more violent, when Leontio, after having read
the

the will, pronounced to the whole assembly, "My lords, having reported the last intentions of the late king to our new monarch, that generous prince consents to honour his cousin, the princess Constance, with his hand." At these words Henriquez interrupted the chancellor, saying, "Leontio, remember the writing which Blanch"—"Sir (said Siffredi with precipitation, before the prince could have time to explain himself) here it is. The grandees of the realm (added he, shewing the paper to the assembly) will here see, by your majesty's august signature, the esteem you have for the princess, and the deference you pay to the last will of the deceased king, your uncle." Having spoke these words, he read the deed with which he himself had filled the paper, containing the most solemn engagement to marry Constance, conformable to the intention of Roger. The hall rung with repeated shouts of all present, who cried, "Long live our magnanimous king Henriquez:" for, as nobody was ignorant of the aversion which that prince had always manifested for the princess, it was feared, not without reason, that he would revolt against the condition of the will, and, by these means, raise commotions in the kingdom. But the reading of this paper entirely composed the minds of the nobles and people, and excited these general acclamations, which, in secret, tortured the monarch's soul.

Constance, who, both on account of her own glory, and her passion for Henriquez, enjoyed the public satisfaction more than any body, chose this time to assure him of her gratitude. But the prince, in vain endeavouring to constrain himself, received her compliment with great affliction, and was, indeed, in such disorder, that he could not even perform what decency required. At last, yielding to the violence of his passion, he approached Siffredi, whom the duty of his office obliged to be pretty near his person, and, with a low voice, said, "What

have you done, Leontio? the subscription which I put into your daughter's hands was not intended for this use. You have betrayed"—“ Sir, (said Siffredi, in a resolute tone) consider your own glory: if you refuse to follow the will of the king your uncle, you lose the crown of Sicily.” He had no sooner spoke in this manner than he removed at a greater distance from the king that he might not have an opportunity to reply. Henriquez remained in the utmost perplexity, and felt himself agitated by contrary emotions. He was incensed against Siffredi; he could not resolve to abandon Blanch: but, distracted between her and the interest of his glory, it was some time before he could come to any resolution. However, he was determined at last, and thought he had fallen upon a method to preserve the daughter of Siffredi, without renouncing the throne. He feigned submission to the will of Roger, and purposed, while a dispensation for his marriage with his cousin should be soliciting at Rome, to gain the nobles of the realm by his bounty, and establish his power so well that he should not be obliged to fulfil its conditions.

As soon as he had formed this design he became more tranquil, and turning to Constance, confirmed to her what the high chancellor had read before the whole assembly. But in the very moment when he betrayed himself so far as to plight his troth to her, Blanch arrived in the council-hall. She came thither by her father's command, to pay her respects to the princess, and her ears were struck with the words of Henriquez at her first entrance. Besides, Leontio, being desirous that she should have no cause to doubt of her misfortune, said, while he presented her to Constance, “ Daughter do homage to your queen, and with her all the sweets of a flourishing reign and happy marriage.” This terrible stroke overwhelmed the unfortunate Blanch! in vain she endeavoured to conceal her grief; she blushed and grew pale alternately, and shook through every limb. Nevertheless,
the

the princess had not the least suspicion of the cause, but attributed the disorder in which she paid her compliment, to the perplexity of a young creature bred up in solitude, and altogether unaccustomed to the court. It was quite otherwise with the young king: the sight of Blanch abashed him: and the despair he observed in her eyes transported him quite beside himself. He did not doubt, that, judging by appearances, she believed him unfaithful. He would have been less uneasy could he have spoke to her: but how could he find an opportunity, when all Sicily, as one may say, had its eyes upon him? Besides, the cruel Siffredi deprived him of that hope: for reading the thoughts of these two lovers in their looks, and willing to prevent the mischief which the violence of their passion might create in the state, that minister, in an artful manner, carried his daughter out of the assembly, and set out with her on his return to Belmont: resolved, for more reasons than one, to have her married as soon as possible.

They were no sooner arrived than he made her acquainted with all the horror of her fate, by declaring that he had promised her in marriage to the constable. "Just Heaven! (cried she, in a transport of grief, which her father's presence could not repress) for what direful punishment is the unfortunate Blanch reserved!" Her despair was even so violent as to suspend all the faculties of her soul. She was seized with an universal chillness, and becoming clay-cold and wan, swooned away in the arms of her father. He was affected with her condition; but, though he shared her affliction with all the tenderness of a parent, his first resolution still remained unshaken. Blanch at length recovered her spirits, more through the exquisite sensation of her grief than through the water which Siffredi sprinkled on her face; and perceiving, while she opened her languishing eyes, "Sir (said she with a feeble voice) I am ashamed that you have seen my weakness; but death, which must soon

end my torments, will, in a little time, rid you of an unhappy daughter, who has dared to dispose of her heart without your consent."—No, my dear Blanch (replied Leontio) live and let virtue resume its empire in your breast. The constable's passion does you honour; he is the most considerable match in the kingdom."—"I esteem his person and his merit (said Blanch, interrupting him) but, Sir, the king had made me hope"—"Daughter (said Siffredi, cutting her short in his turn) I know all that you can say on that subject. I am not ignorant of your tenderness for the prince, which, at another conjuncture, I should not disapprove. You should even see me eager to insure you of the hand of Henriquez, if the interest of his glory, and that of the state did not oblige him to bestow it on Constance. It is on that condition only, that the late king designed him for the successor; and would you have him prefer you to the crown of Sicily? Believe me, I sympathize with you in the cruel stroke you suffer: but since we cannot withstand the decrees of destiny, make one generous effort. Your glory is concerned in concealing from the kingdom the vain hope with which you flattered yourself. Your sensibility for the king may raise reports to your disadvantage; and the only means of preventing them will be to marry the constable. In short, Blanch, this is no time to deliberate. The king yields you for a throne, and marries Constance. The constable has my promise, which I beg you will perform; and if I must use my authority to bring you to this resolution, I order you to comply."

So saying, he left her to reflect upon what she had heard, hoping, that after having maturely considered the arguments he had used, to support her virtue against her inclination, she would resolve, of herself, to give her hand to the constable. In this he was not mistaken. But what pangs did it cost the melancholy Blanch, before she came to that determination!

She

She was in a condition, which, of all others, was most worthy of compassion! Grief for seeing her presages for the infidelity of Henriquez changed into certainty, and for being constrained in losing him, to give herself away to another, whom she could not love, created in her such violent transports of affliction, that every moment was attended with new torture. "If my misfortune is certain (cried she) how can I resist it without dying? cruel destiny! why was I seduced with the most delicious hopes, when I was doomed to such an abyss of misery! and thou, perfidious lover! how durst thou betroth thyself to another after thou hadst promised eternal fidelity to me? Hast thou so soon forgot the faith which thou hast sworn? As a punishment for having so cruelly deceived me, may heaven make the nuptial bed, which thou art going to stain with perjury, not a scene of pleasure, but remorse! may the caresses of Constance convey poison to thy unfaithful heart! and may thy marriage be as baleful as mine! Yes, traitor! I will espouse the Constable, whom I cannot love, to revenge me upon myself, and punish me for having so indiscreetly chosen the object of my love. Since my religion forbids me to make an attempt upon my life, the days I have to live shall be nothing else than an unhappy series of troubles and disquiet. If thou still preservest any tenderness for me, thou wilt be mortified at seeing me throw myself into the arms of another; and if thou hast entirely forgot me, Sicily, at least, may boast of having produced a woman, who punished herself for having too simply disposed of her heart."

In such a situation did this unhappy victim of love and duty pass the night that preceded her marriage with the constable; and Siffredi finding her next day ready to comply with his desire, made haste to take the advantage of that favourable disposition. He sent for the constable to Belmont that same day, and married him privately to his daughter, in the

chapel of the castle. It was not enough to renounce a crown, to lose for ever, a person whom she loved, and bestow herself upon the object of her hatred, but she was also obliged to dissemble her sentiments before a husband, who was inflamed with the most ardent passion for her, and naturally of a jealous disposition. That spouse, charmed with the possession of what he held most dear, was continually in her company, and did not even allow her the sad consolation of bewailing her misfortune in secret. When night approached, the daughter of Leontio felt her affliction redouble: but what were her pangs when her women, after having undressed, left her alone with the constable! He asked, in a respectful manner, the cause of that sorrow with which she seemed to be depressed; and Blanch, perplexed by the question, feigned herself indisposed. This deceived her husband at first, but he did not long continue in his mistake: for, as he was really concerned at the condition in which he saw her, and pressed her to go to bed, his entreaties, which she misinterpreted, presented such a cruel image to her imagination, that, being unable to contain herself any longer, she gave free vent to her sighs and tears. What a sight was this for a man who believed himself at the very summit of his happiness! He no longer doubted that the affliction of his wife portended something sinister to his love. Nevertheless, though the knowledge of it threw him into a situation almost as deplorable as that of Blanch, he had such command of himself, that he concealed his suspicions. He redoubled his entreaties, and continued to press his spouse to go to rest, assuring her, that he would not interrupt the repose which she seemed so much to want. He even offered to call her women, if she thought that their assistance could alleviate her indisposition. Blanch, encouraged by this promise, told him that her present weakness only required a little sleep. He pretended to believe her, and going to bed

bed together, they passed a night very different from those which Cupid and Hymen bestow on two lovers inspired by mutual passion.

While Siffredi's daughter indulged her sorrow, the constable endeavoured, within himself, to divine the cause that rendered his marriage so unhappy. He concluded, that there was a rival in the case; but was bewildered in his own imagination, when he attempted to discover who that rival was; and the sole result of his conjectures was, that he was the most unhappy of all mankind. He had already spent two thirds of the night in these agitations, when his ears were struck with a hollow noise; and he was not a little surprized to hear somebody walking softly in the chamber. He believed himself mistaken; for he remembered that he himself had locked the door, after Blanch's women were gone, and drew back the curtain to discover, by the evidence of his eyes, the cause of the noise which he heard: but the light, which had been left in the chimney, was extinguished, and, in a little time, he heard the name of Blanch repeated several times, in a soft and languishing tone. Then his jealous suspicions were inflamed to fury, and his honour alarmed, obliging him to rise, in order to prevent an affront, or take vengeance for it, he seized his sword, and moved towards that side whence the voice seemed to come. Feeling a naked sword opposed to his own, he advanced, the other retired: he pursued, and the other vanished from his pursuit. In vain did he search for him, who seemed to fly, through all the corners of the room, as much as the darkness would allow: he could not find him; he stopt, listened, and heard nothing. All seemed to be enchantment! he went to the door, which he imagined had favoured the flight of the secret enemy of his honour, but he found it fast locked as before. Not being able to comprehend any thing of this adventure, he called those of his people who were nearest, and as he opened the door for that

that purpose, stood in the passage, and kept himself on his guard, that the person whom he sought might not escape.

Some servants hearing his repeated cries, came running with lights; upon which he took a candle, and made a new search in the chamber, sword in hand; but found nobody, nor the least mark of any person's having been there. He did not even perceive the private door, nor the opening through which there was a passage. He could not, however, blindfold himself, with regard to the circumstances of his misfortune, but remained in a strange confusion of thoughts. Should he have recourse to Blanch, she was too much concerned in the truth for him to expect an explanation from her. He therefore resolved to go and open his heart to Leontio, after having dismissed his servants, telling them that he thought he had heard a noise in his chamber, but was mistaken. He met his father-in-law coming out of his apartment, at the disturbance he had heard, and recounted to him what had happened, with all the marks of extreme agitation and profound grief.

Siffredi was surprized at the adventure, which, tho' it did not seem natural, he, nevertheless, believed; and thinking that the king's love was capable of any thing, was very much afflicted with that consideration. But, far from flattering the jealous suspicions of his son-in-law, he represented to him, with an air of assurance, that the voice, which he thought he heard, and the sword that was opposed to his, could be no other than phantoms of an imagination, misled by jealousy; for, it was impossible that any body could have gone into his daughter's chamber; that with regard to the melancholly which he had observed in his wife, it might be occasioned by some indisposition; that honour ought not to be answerable for the vicissitudes of temper; that the change of condition in a girl used to live in solitude, who sees herself on a sudden delivered to a man, whom she has not had

had time to know and to love, might be the cause of those tears, sighs, and that sharp affliction, of which he complained; that love was not to be kindled in maidens of a noble birth, by any other means than time and assiduity; for which reasons, he exhorted him to calm his disquiet, redouble his tenderness and care, in order to dispose Blanch to become more sensible of his merit; and intreated him to return to his chamber, being persuaded that his uneasiness and distrust were injuries done to the virtue of his wife.

The constable made no answer to the remonstrances of his father-in-law; whether he really began to think that he might have been imposed upon by the disorder of his mind, or judged it a wiser course to dissemble, than to undertake in vain, to convince the old man of an event so void of all probability—he returned to his apartment, lay down by his wife, and tried to obtain, by sleep, some respite from his disquiet. Blanch, on her side, was not less uneasy than he: she had but too well heard that which alarmed her husband, and could not consider as an illusion an adventure the secret and motives of which she knew.—Surprized that Henriquez should seek to introduce himself into her apartment, after having so solemnly pledged his faith to Constance, instead of approving or feeling the least glimpse of joy at this step, she looked upon it as a new outrage, and her heart was incensed against him.

While the daughter of Siffredi, prejudiced against the young king, believed him the most unfaithful of men, that unhappy prince, more in love than ever, wished for an interview with Blanch, in order to encourage her against the appearances that condemned him. He would have come sooner to Belmont for that purpose, had he been permitted by the multiplicity of business in which he was necessarily engaged; but he could not steal away from court before that night. He was too well acquainted with all the private

vate concerns of a place where he had been educated; to be under any difficulty of getting unseen into Siffredi's castle: and he still kept the key of a private door that belonged to the garden, through which he got into his old apartment, from whence he passed into the chamber of Blanch.—You may imagine the astonishment of that prince when he found a man there, and felt a sword opposed to his own. He had well nigh discovered himself, and punished on the spot the audacious wretch who durst lift his sacrilegious hand against his lawful king; but the respect he owed to Leontio's daughter suspended his resentment. He retired in the same manner as he had entered, and, more afflicted than ever, took the road to Palermo; where arriving some moments before day, he shut himself up in his apartment. But the agitation of his spirits depriving him of rest, he resolved to return to Belmont; his safety, honour, and above all, his love, not permitting him to remain longer ignorant of the least circumstance of such a cruel adventure.

It was no sooner day than he commanded his hunting equipage to be got ready, and under pretence of taking that diversion, rode far into the forest of Belmont, attended by his sportsmen and some courtiers. He followed the chase some time, the better to conceal his design; and when he saw every one eagerly engaged at the heels of the hounds; he separated himself from them, and all alone, took his way to Leontio's castle. He was too well acquainted with the paths of the forest to lose himself, and his impatience not permitting him to spare his horse, he in a little time over-run the distance that separated him from the object of his love. He was just inventing some plausible pretext to procure for himself a private interview with the daughter of Siffredi, when, crossing a small road that led to one of the park-gates, he perceived hard by two women, sitting in close conversation at the root of a tree. As he did not doubt that these persons belonged to the castle, the sight of them raised within him

him
por
the
be
wit
est
at f
H
the
all
mel
the
repr
mac
in y
crim
and
thou
ble
ed h
figh
“ H
wha
haza
your
mak
your
forth
(said
cruel
from
who
you
Sir,
man
are f
const
ward
and

him some emotion: but he was much more transported, when the women turning towards him at the noise of his horse's feet, he knew one of them to be his dear Blanch, who had escaped from the castle with Nisa, one of her women, who enjoyed the greatest share of her confidence, to bewail her misfortune at full liberty.

He flew—he threw himself headlong (if I may use the expression) at her feet; and perceiving in her eyes all the marks of the most profound affliction, was melted at the sight. “Fair Blanch (said he) suspend the emotions of your grief: appearances, I confess, represent me guilty to your eyes: but when you are made acquainted with the design which I have formed in your behalf, that which you now look upon as a crime, will appear to you a proof of my innocence and excess of love.” These words, which Henriquez thought capable of moderating, served only to redouble the affliction of Blanch, who would have answered him, had not her voice been choaked up with her sighs. The prince, astonished at her disorder, said, “How, madam, can’t I then calm your disquiet? By what misfortune have I lost your confidence? I, who hazard my crown, and even my life, to keep myself yours!”—’Twas then that the daughter of Siffredi, making an effort to explain herself, replied, “Sir, your promises are now unseasonable.—Nothing henceforth can bind my destiny to yours.” “Ah, Blanch! (said Henriquez, interrupting her with warmth) what cruel words are these I hear! who dares ravish you from my love? who dares oppose the fury of a king, who would put all Sicily in flames, rather than suffer you to be torn from his hopes?”—“All your power, Sir, (answered Siffredi’s daughter, in a languishing manner) cannot remove the obstacles by which we are separated.—I am the constable’s wife”—“The constable’s wife!” (cried the prince, staggering backwards, and unable to go on.) He was confounded and overwhelmed by this unexpected blow: his strength

strength forsook him, and he dropt down at the root of a tree that grew behind him.—Pale, trembling, and depress'd, he had nothing free but his eyes, which he fixed upon Blanch, in such a manner as gave her to understand how deeply affected he was with the unhappy tidings she had declared. She, on the other hand, looked upon him with an air which convinced him, that her emotions were little different from those he felt; and these two unfortunate lovers preserved, between them, a silence that had something terrible in it. At length the prince, recollecting himself a little, by an effort of his courage, resumed the discourse, and said to Blanch with a sigh, "What have you done, madam? Your credulity has ruined me, and undone yourself."

Blanch, piqued at the prince's seeming to upbraid her, when she thought she had much more cause to complain of him, replied, "What, Sir! do you add dissimulation to infidelity? Would you have me discredit my own eyes and ears, and believe you innocent, in spite of the evidence of my senses? No, Sir, I own myself incapable of such an effort of reason."—"Nevertheless, madam (answered the king) you are imposed upon by these very witnesses which seem so faithful: even they have assisted in betraying you; and that I am innocent and faithful, is no less true than that you are the constable's wife." "How, Sir! (said she) did not I hear you confirm to Constance the present of your hand and heart? Have you not assured the nobles of the kingdom, that you would fulfil the conditions of the late king's will? and has not the princess received the homage of your new subjects, in quality of queen and spouse of Henriquez? Were my eyes then bewitched? Say, say rather, unfaithful prince! that you did not think Blanch ought to balance in your heart the interest of a throne; and, without stooping to feign a passion that you no longer feel, and perhaps never felt, confess that the crown of Sicily appeared to you more fixed with Constance than

with

with Leontio's daughter.—You are in the right, Sir: a shining throne was no more my due than the heart of a prince, such as you are. I was too vain to pretend to either; but you ought not to have indulged me in my error.—You know the alarms I felt on account of losing you; a misfortune that then seemed to me almost inevitable. Why did you encourage me with hope? Would to heaven my fears had not been dissipated! I should have accused fortune, not you; and you would have at least preserved my heart, though at the expence of a hand which no other should ever have obtained. It is now no time to justify yourself: I am the constable's wife: and that I may spare myself the consequence of a conversation, that makes my glory blush, give me leave, Sir, without failing in that respect which I owe you, to quit the presence of a prince whom I am no longer at liberty to hear."

So saying, she left Henriquez with as much haste as her present weak condition would allow. "Stop, madam! (cried he) and do not drive to despair a prince, who will rather overturn that throne, which you upbraid him with having preferred to you, than fulfil the expectation of his new subjects." "That sacrifice (said Blanch) is at present vain. While I am married to the constable, these generous transports will not avail: since I am then no longer at liberty, it is of small importance to me that you reduce Sicily to ashes, or to whom you give your hand. If I have been weak enough to let my heart be surprized, I shall at least have fortitude enough to stifle its emotions, and let the new king of Sicily see, that the constable's wife is no longer the lover of prince Henriquez." When she pronounced these words, being close to the park-gate, she entered it of a sudden with Nisa; and locking it on the other side, left the prince overwhelmed with sorrow. He could not recover the blow which Blanch had given him, by the account of her marriage. "Unjust Blanch! (cried he) you have lost all remembrance of our mutual engagement! in spite

spite of our reciprocal vows, we are for ever parted; and the idea which I had cherished of possessing your charms, was no more than a vain illusion. Ah, cruel maid! how dearly did I buy your approbation of my flame!"

Then the image of his rival's happiness presented itself to his fancy, with all the horrors of jealousy; which took such full possession of his soul for some moments, that he was on the point of sacrificing the constable, and even Siffredi himself, to his resentment. Reason, however, by degrees, allayed the violence of his transports; but the impossibility he perceived of banishing from Blanch the impressions she retained of his infidelity, threw him again into despair.—He flattered himself with the hopes of effacing them, provided he could converse with her at liberty; for which purpose, judging it necessary to remove the constable, he resolved to have him apprehended, as a person suspected of designs against the state. He accordingly charged with this office the captain of his guards, who repairing to Belmont, secured his person in the twilight, and brought him prisoner to the castle of Palermo.

This accident filled all Belmont with consternation. Siffredi set out immediately to offer himself to the king, as security for his son-in-law, and to represent the troublesome consequences of such an arrest. The prince, who expected this step of his minister, and who was resolved, at all events, to obtain a free interview with Blanch, before the constable should be released, had expressly ordered that no person whatever should speak with him till next day. But Leontio, notwithstanding this order, finding means to get access to the king's chamber, presented himself before him, saying, "Sir, if a loyal and respectful subject may be allowed to complain of his master, I am come to complain of you to yourself.—What crime has my son-in-law committed? Has your majesty duly reflected on the eternal reproach you have fixed upon my family;

family; and on the consequences of an imprisonment, which may alienate from your service the hearts of those who fill the most important posts of the realm?" "I have certain intelligence, (replied the king) that the constable carries on criminal correspondence with the infant Don Pedro." "Criminal correspondence! (cried Leontio, with surprise) do not believe it.—Your majesty is imposed upon: treason never entered the family of Siffredi; and the constable's being my son-in-law, is enough to screen him from all suspicion.—The constable is innocent; but other secret views have induced you to arrest him."

"Since you talk to me so freely, (replied the king) I will speak to you in the same manner. You complain of the constable's being imprison'd: what! have I not more cause to complain of your cruelty? 'Tis you, barbarous Siffredi! who have robbed me of my quiet, and reduced me, by your officious cares, to a condition that makes me envy the lowest of mankind. But don't flatter yourself that I will enter into your schemes:—my marriage with Constance is resolved upon in vain."—"How, Sir! (cried Leontio, trembling) can you refuse to marry the princess, after having flattered her with that hope before your whole people?" "If I deceive their expectation, (replied the king) ascribe it solely to yourself. Why did you lay me under a necessity of promising that which I could not perform? Who compelled you to fill a paper which I gave your daughter, with the name of Constance? You was not ignorant of my attention. You tyrannized over the heart of Blanch, in making her marry a man whom she did not love. But what right had you to dispose of mine, in favour of a princess whom I hate!—Have you forgot, that she is the daughter of that cruel Mathilda, who, trampling under her feet all the ties of blood and humanity, made my father breathe his last, under all the rigours of captivity? And shall I espouse her? No, Siffredi! lay aside that hope.—Before you see the torch of these direful

direful nuptials lighted, you will see all Sicily in flames, and its ashes quenched in blood."

"What do I hear! (cried Leontio) Ah! Sir, what a prospect have you shewn me? What terrible threats!—But I am unseasonably alarmed, (added he, in another tone) you love your subjects too well, to entail upon them such misery. You will not allow yourself to be overcome by love. You will not tarnish your virtues with the weaknesses of ordinary men. If I have bestowed my daughter on the constable, it was done, Sir, with a view of acquiring for your majesty a valiant subject, who can support with his arm, and the troops which are at his disposal, your interest against that of the prince Don Pedro. I thought that in attaching him to my family, by such intimate ties—" Ha! these are the ties, (cried the prince Henriquez) these are the fatal ties that have undone me! Cruel friend! why did you inflict such a heavy stroke upon me? Did I order you to manage my concerns at the expence of my heart? Why did you not leave me to support my rights by myself? Did I want courage to reduce those who should rebel against me? I should have known how to punish the constable, had he disobeyed me. I know that kings ought not to be tyrants, and that the happiness of their people should be their chief aim; but must they therefore be the slaves of their subjects, and from the moment that heaven chuses them to govern, lose the right that nature grants to all men, of disposing their affections as they please? Ah! if they must not enjoy the privilege of the lowest class of mortals, take back, Siffredi, that sovereign power which you would confirm at the expence of my repose."

"You know very well, Sir, (replied the minister) that your marriage with the princess was, by the late king, made the condition of your succession to the crown."—"And what right (answered Henriquez) had he to establish that disposition? Had he received such an unworthy law, when he succeeded to his brother king Charles? And how came you to be so weak

as to submit to the unjust conditions? For an high chancellor, methinks you are very ill informed of our customs. In a word, tho' I have promised my hand to Constance it was not a voluntary engagement, therefore I do not intend to keep my word; and if Don Pedro, from my refusal, conceives the hope of mounting my throne, without engaging the people in a quarrel, which might cost too much blood, let the sword decide, in single combat, which of us is most worthy to reign." Leontio, not daring to urge him any further, contented himself with asking, on his knees, the enlargement of his son-in-law, which he obtained.—"Go, (said the king to him) return to Belmont, whither the constable will soon follow you." The minister went away, and got to Belmont, persuaded that his son-in-law would not be long behind him. But in this he was mistaken: Henriquez resolved to see Blanch that night, and therefore deferred the release of her husband till next day.

Mean while the constable was tortured with the most cruel reflections: his imprisonment had opened his eyes, with regard to the true cause of his misfortune: he therefore abandoned himself intirely to his jealousy; and renouncing the allegiance he had hitherto so commendably preserved, breathed nothing but vengeance. As he concluded that the king would not fail of being with Blanch that night, in order to surprize them together, he begged the governor of the castle of Palermo to let him go out, assuring him that he would return to prison next morning by day. The governor, who was entirely devoted to him, consented to this the more easily, as he knew that Siffredi had already obtained his liberty, and even furnished him with a horse to carry him to Belmont; where the constable being artved, he tied his horse to a tree, entered the park by a little door, of which he had the key, and was so lucky as to get into the castle unperceived. He went straight to the apartment of his wife, and concealing himself in an antichamber behind

hind a screen, which he found there, proposed to observe from thence all that should pass, and to appear suddenly in Blanch's chamber, at the least noise he should hear.—While he was in this situation, he saw Nisa come out from her mistress, and retire to the closet where she lay.

Siffredi's daughter, who had easily discerned the motive of her husband's imprisonment, concluded that he would not return that night to Belmont, although her father had told her, the king assured him the constable would set out soon after him. She did not doubt that Henriquez would take the advantage of that conjuncture to visit and converse with her at liberty; and in this opinion she waited for the prince, in order to reproach him with an action which might have terrible consequences, in regard to her.—Accordingly, in a little time after Nisa had withdrawn, the partition opened, and the king came and threw himself at Blanch's feet, saying, "Madam, do not condemn before you have given me the hearing: if I have ordered the constable to be imprisoned, consider that it was the only means I had left to justify myself: therefore impute that artifice to yourself alone. Why did you, this morning, refuse to hear me? Alas! to-morrow your husband will be enlarged, and I shall never have an opportunity of speaking to you again. Hear me, then, for this last time: if the loss of you makes me the most forlorn of mankind, at least grant me the melancholy consolation of convincing you, that my infidelity is not the cause of my misfortune; (for though I confirmed to Constance the offer of my hand, it was what I could not dispense with doing, in the situation to which your father had reduced me.—There was a necessity for my deceiving the princess, for your interest as well as my own, in order to secure to you the crown as well as the person of your lover. This I flattered myself with accomplishing, and had already taken measures to break that fatal engagement; but you have destroyed

my

my plan, and, by giving yourself away too inconsiderately, laid up a fund of eternal sorrow for two hearts, which might have been rendered happy by the most inviolable love!"

He ended this complaint with such visible marks of real despair, that Blanch was touched with his condition, and no longer doubted his innocence, which at first gave her some joy; but afterwards, stung with the consideration of her misfortune, "Ah, Sir! (said she to the prince) after the cruel determination of our fate, you increase my affliction by letting me know that you were not guilty! What have I done! Unfortunate that I am! my resentment has betrayed me! I thought myself abandoned, and in revenge accepted of the constable's hand, which was presented by my father! I am guilty of the crime, and have been the cause of our mutual mis-hap! Alas! while I accused you of having deceived me, it was I, too credulous lover! it was I who broke those bonds which I had sworn to keep for ever inviolate! Revenge yourself, Sir, in your turn.—Hate the ungrateful Blanch:—forget her." "Ah, madam! (said Henriquez, interrupting her with a melancholy air) how shall I find means to tear from my heart a passion, which even your injustice cannot extinguish?"—"You must however, Sir, make that effort;" (replied Siffredi's daughter, sighing.) "What! are you capable of that effort yourself?" (said the king). "I cannot promise to succeed; (answered she) but I will spare no pains in the endeavour." "Ah, cruel Blanch! (said the prince) you will easily forget Henriquez, since you are able to form such a design:" "And what can you expect? (replied she, in a more resolute tone) Do you flatter yourself, that I will allow you to continue your addresses? No, Sir, abandon that hope. Though I was not born to be a queen, heaven never formed me to listen to dishonourable love. My husband, as well as you, Sir, is descended from the noble house of Anjou; and if my duty

did not raise an insurmountable obstacle to your gallantry, my glory would hinder me from enduring it: I conjure you, therefore, to retire. We must see one another no more." "Heavens! what barbarity," (replied the king) Ah, Blanch! Is it possible that you should treat me with such rigour? You do not think then, that your being in the arms of the constable, is enough to overwhelm me? you must also forbid me your sight, the only consolation I had left!" "Fly me, rather (answered the daughter of Siffredi, shedding some tears) the sight of what one tenderly loves, ceases to be pleasing, when the hope of possessing it is lost. Adieu, Sir! Fly from me. You owe that effort to your own glory and my reputation. I ask it also, for my quiet: for in short, although my virtue should not be alarmed by the emotions of my heart, the remembrance of your tenderness will entail upon me such cruel conflicts, that shall scarce have strength enough to maintain them."

She pronounced these words so passionately, that she unwittingly overturned a candlestick which stood on a table behind her; and the candle going out in falling, she took it up in order to light it again, for which purpose, she opened the door of the antichamber, and went to the closet of Nisa, who was not yet gone to bed. The king, who waited for her return, no sooner saw her approach with the light, than he made pressing instances to her, that she would suffer his attachment. The constable hearing the prince's voice, rushed into the chamber sword in hand, almost at the same time that his wife entered, and advancing towards Henriquez with all the resentment that his rage inspired, "This is too much, tyrant! (cried he) don't think that I am so base as to endure the affront thou hast done my honour." "Traitor, (replied the king, putting himself in a posture of defence) don't imagine that thou art able to execute thy design with impunity." With these words they began a combat which was too furious to last long: the

the constable fearing that Siffredi and his servants, alarmed at the cries of Blanch, would soon come and oppose his vengeance, fought without caution. His rage divested him of all judgment; he took his measures so ill, that he ran upon his adversary's sword, which entered his body to the hilt, and the moment he fell, the king checked his indignation.

Leontio's daughter, touched with the condition in which she saw her husband, and surmounting the natural reluctance she had for him, threw herself on the floor, and supported him with the most eager concern. But that unhappy spouse was too much prepossessed against her, to be affected with these expressions of her grief and compassion. Death, whose approaches he felt, could not suppress the transports of his jealousy; he saw nothing in his last moments, but the happiness of his rival, and that idea appeared so horrid, that collecting all the strength he had left, he lifted the sword, which was still in his hand, and plunged it in the breast of Blanch. "Die (said he, while he stabbed her) die, unfaithful woman, since the ties of marriage have been too weak to preserve that faith which you swore to me at the altar! And thou, Henriquez (added he) boast not of thy fate. Thou canst not enjoy my misfortune, and therefore I die satisfied." Having spoke thus, he expired, and his countenance, covered as it was with the shades of death, still retained something fierce and terrible. That of Blanch presented quite a different spectacle. The blow she received was mortal; she fell upon the body of her dying spouse, and the blood of this innocent victim was mixed with that of her murderer, who had executed his cruel resolution so suddenly, that the king had not time to prevent its effects.

That unfortunate prince seeing Blanch fall, uttered a loud cry, and, more confounded than she with the blow that robbed her of life, hastened to give her the same succour that she had offered to the constable.

But she said, with a faltering voice, " Sir, you may spare yourself the trouble. I am the victim which unpitying fate demands : may it appease the wrath of heaven, and secure the happiness of your reign." As she pronounced these words, Leontio, brought thither by her cries, entered the chamber, and struck with the objects that presented themselves to his eyes, became motionless where he stood ; while Blanch, without perceiving him, continuing to speak to the king, said, " Adieu, prince, cherish my memory. My love and misfortunes claim that favour. Entertain no resentment against my father. Comfort his age and sorrow, and do justice to his zeal. Above all, make my innocence known. This is what I recommend to you more than any thing. Adieu, my dear Henriquez.—I die—receive my last breath."

So saying, she expired ; and the king having kept a melancholy silence for some time, said to Siffredi, who seemed overwhelmed with woe, " Behold, Leontio, contemplate your own work, and in this tragical event consider the fruit of your officious care and zeal for me !"—The old man was so penetrated with sorrow, that he made no reply—But why should I pretend to describe those things which no language can express ? Let it suffice to say, that both uttered the most moving complaints, as soon as the greatness of their affliction allowed them the use of speech. The king all his life preserved the most tender remembrance of his mistress, and could never be prevailed upon to marry Constance, who being joined by the infant Don Pedro, they spared nothing to avail themselves of Roger's last will : but they were at last obliged to yield to prince Henriquez, who subdued all his enemies.—As for Siffredi, the grief he felt for having been the cause of so many misfortunes, detached him from the world, and rendered his native country insupportable to him : he therefore abandoned Sicily, and crossing over into Spain, with Portia, the only child he had left, purchased this castle,

cast
deat
Po
and
the
of r
tunc
fath
of t

O
Elv
in c
othe
affec
agre
A
den
hou
conc
Gul
a go
with
to a
und
they
affir
form
ing
was

*
tuat
don

castle, where he lived near fifteen years after Blanch's death, and had the comfort before he died, of seeing Portia settled: she married Don Jerome de Silva, and I am the only fruit of that marriage. This (added the widow of Don Pedro de Pinares) is the history of my family, and a faithful account of the misfortunes represented in that picture, which my grandfather, Leontio, ordered to be drawn as a monument of that fatal adventure to his posterity.

C H A P. V.

The behaviour of Aurora de Gusman at Salamanca.

ORTIZ, her companions, and I, having heard this relation, withdrew, and left Aurora with Elvira in the hall, where they spent the rest of the day in conversation. Far from being tired with one another, next day when we set out, they were as much affected at parting as two friends who have long lived agreeably together.

At last we arrived, without meeting any bad accident, at Salamanca *, where we immediately took a house ready furnished, and dame Ortiz, as we had concerted it, assumed the name of Donna Kimena de Gusman. She had been too long a duenna not to be a good actress; accordingly, going out one morning with Aurora, a waiting maid, and valet, she repaired to a house where lodgings were let, and where we understood Pacheco usually lived. Having asked if they had an apartment to be let, they answered in the affirmative, and shewed her into one pretty handsomely furnished, which she hired immediately, giving earnest to the landlady, and telling her, that it was designed for one of her nephews who was com-

* Salamanca is one of the largest cities in Spain, situated on the banks of the river Tormes, in the kingdom of Leon, and famous for its university.

ing from Toledo to study at Salamanca, and would arrive that very day.

The duenna and my mistress having secured this lodging, went home again, and the fair Aurora, without losing time, transformed herself into a cavalier; covering her black hair with a light-coloured tour, painting her eye-brows of the same complexion, and adjusting herself in such a manner as that she might very well pass for a young nobleman. Her carriage was free and easy, and excepting her face, which was a little too handsome for a man, nothing could possibly betray her disguise: her maid, who was to serve in quality of page, took the dress also, and we were under no apprehension of her ill-acting, for she had a good modest assurance in her air, which was very well adapted for the part she was to play. In the afternoon, these two actresses being in a condition to appear on the stage, that is, in the lodging which had been taken, I accompanied them thither in a coach, with all the baggage we should have occasion for.

The landlady, whose name was Bernarda Ramirez, received us with great civility, and conducted us to our apartment, where we began to enter into conversation, and agreed with her for our board by the month. Then asking if she had a good many boarders, she replied, "I have none at present. I might have abundance, if I would take all sorts of people; but I receive none but young noblemen; and I expect one this evening, who comes from Madrid to finish his studies. His name is Don Lewis de Pacheco; perhaps you may have heard of him." "No (said Aurora) I know nothing of him, and you will oblige me by letting me know what sort of a man he is, since I am to lodge in the same house with him." "Sir (answered the landlady, looking at this false cavalier) he is quite a fine figure, and pretty much of your own make. Ah! how happy you will be in one another! By St. Jago, I may boast of having at my

my house two of the most handsome noblemen in Spain." "This Don Lewis (replied my mistress) has doubtless a thousand love intrigues in Salamanca?"

"Yes, I'll assure you (said the old woman) he is a brisk gallant, upon my word. He has no more to do, but shew himself and conquer; and among others, he has quite captivated a lady of youth and beauty, whose name is Isabella, an old lawyer's daughter, who is fond of him to distraction." "And tell me, good mother (cried Aurora, interrupting her with precipitation) is he as much in love with her?" "He was (replied Bernarda Ramirez) before his departure for Madrid; but I know not if he retains his passion for her still; for in these points he is not much to be depended upon, but skips from woman to woman, as all young gentlemen usually do."

The good widow had scarce done speaking, when hearing a noise in the court-yard, we looked through the window, and perceived two men alighting from their horses: these were no other than Don Lewis de Pacheco himself, just arrived from Madrid, with his valet de chambre. Upon which the old woman left us in order to receive him, and my mistress prepared herself, not without emotion, to play the part of Don Felix. Don Lewis, in a short time, entered our apartment in his boots, and saluted Aurora, saying, "Understanding that a young nobleman of Toledo is a lodger here, I beg leave, to express my joy in having him for a companion." While my mistress returned this compliment, Pacheco seemed surprized to see such an amiable cavalier; and could not help telling her, that he had never before beheld any man so handsome and genteelly made. A great many civilities passed on both sides, after which Don Lewis retired to the apartment allotted for him.

While he was shifting and dressing, a sort of page who wanted to deliver a letter to him, meeting Aurora on the stair case by accident, mistook her for Don Lewis, and giving her the billet, said, "Signior cavalier,

cavalier, though I had never before seen Signior Pacheco, I believe I need not ask if you are he, being persuaded that I am not mistaken." "No, friend, (replied my mistress, with admirable presence of mind) you are assuredly not mistaken; and you acquit yourself of your commission surprizingly well. I am Don Lewis de Pacheco; you may return, and I will take care to send an answer very soon. The page disappearing, Aurora shut herself up with her maid and me, and opening the letter, read these words:—

"With what joy did I receive the news of your arrival at Salamanca! My transport had well nigh got the better of my reason!—But is Isabella still dear to you? Make haste, and assure her in person of your constancy: though she will scarce be able to support the pleasure of finding you unchanged!"

"This billet (said Aurora) proclaims the violence of the author's passion; and the lady is a rival not to be contemned. I must spare nothing to detach Don Lewis from her, and even hinder him from seeing her: the undertaking, I own, is difficult; but nevertheless, I don't despair of success." Accordingly, my mistress having mused a minute or two, added, "I'll engage there shall be a breach between them in less than four and twenty hours." Pacheco having taken a little repose in his own apartment, returned to ours, and renewed his conversation with Aurora before supper. "Signior cavalier, (said he to her, with an air of pleasantry) I believe the husbands and lovers will have no cause to rejoice at your arrival in Salamanca; but rather have reason to be uneasy: as for my own part, I tremble for my conquests." "Harkee (answered my mistress, in the same tone) your fear is not ill grounded: Don Felix de Mendosa is a formidable man, I assure you. I have been in this country before, and know that the women here are not insensible: about a month ago,

in my way through this city, I stopt here eight days, and I will tell you in confidence, that I inflamed an old lawyer's daughter.

I perceived Don Lewis disordered at these words. "May one, without being thought impertinent (said he) ask the lady's name?" "How! without being thought impertinent! (cried the pretended Don Felix) why should I make a mystery of it to you? D'ye think me more reserved than other noblemen of my age? You must not do me so much injustice. Besides, between you and me, the object does not deserve such delicacy. She's only a pitiful citizen; and a man of quality, you know, is never seriously engrossed by such abigails; but thinks he does them an honour in debauching them. I will therefore without ceremony acquaint you with the name of the lawyer's daughter, which is Isabella." "And the lawyer (cried Pacheco, interrupting her with impatience) is not he called Signior Murcia de la Lianna?" "The very same (replied my mistress) here is a letter which I received from her just now. You may read it, and see whether or not the lady has a kindness for me." Don Lewis casting his eyes over the billet, knew the hand, and was struck dumb with confusion. "What is the matter? (added Aurora, with an air of astonishment) you change colour! I believe, God forgive me, that you have some concern in this lady. Ah! how vexed am I for having spoke of her so freely.

"I think myself obliged to you for your information (said Don Lewis, in a transport of anger and disdain) Perfidious, fickle creature! Don Felix, I am bound to you for ever. You have extricated me out of an error, in which I might have remained a long time. I thought myself beloved. Beloved, did I say! I believed myself adored by that Isabella. I had, indeed, some regard for the creature: but now I see she is a coquette who deserves nothing but contempt."

"I applaud your resentment (said Aurora, feigning indig-

indignation in her turn) a lawyer's daughter ought to think herself happy in having such an accomplished nobleman as you for her lover. Her inconstancy is inexcusable; and far from accepting the sacrifice she makes of you, I intend to punish her by slighting her favours." "For my part (replied Pacheco) the only vengeance that I shall take is never to see her again." "You are in the right (cried the false Mendosa); nevertheless, that she may know how much we both despise her, I think each of us should write to her an insulting letter, which I will inclose in one paper, and send as an answer to this her billet. But before we proceed to this extremity, consult your heart. Perhaps, you will one day repent of having broke with Isabella." "No, no, (said Don Lewis) I shall never be so weak; and, in the mean time, consent to mortify the ungrateful creature, as you have proposed."

I was accordingly sent for paper, pen, and ink, and both of them set about composing very obliging letters for the daughter of doctor Murcia de Lianna. Pacheco, in particular, could not find terms strong enough to express his sentiments, and tore five or six half finished billets, because he thought they were not sufficiently severe. One, however, he was satisfied with at last; and no doubt he had reason so to be; for it contained these words: "Learn to know yourself, my princess; and be no longer so vain as to believe that I love you. If I be captivated, it must be with other kind of merit than yours, which is scarce sufficient to amuse me for a few moments: and only calculated for diverting the meanest scholars of the university."—This courteous letter being written, and Aurora having finished hers, which was not a whit milder; she sealed them both, and inclosing them together, gave me the packet, saying, "There, Gil Blas, be sure to deliver this to Isabella, this evening—You understand me," added she, tipping me the wink, the meaning of which I could easily

com-

comprehend. "Yes, Sir (answered I) the thing shall be done to your wish."

At the same time I went out, and being in the street, said to myself, "Oho, Gil Blas, then it seems you play the valet in this farce. Well, friend, shew that you have wit enough to perform such a fine part. Signior Don Felix, as you see, depends so much on your understanding, that he contents himself with giving you a sign only. Is he to blame for that? No. I conceive his meaning; he desires that I should deliver the billet of Don Lewis only. That is the interpretation of the sign, than which nothing could be more intelligible. I did not hesitate in opening the packet, from which I took Pacheco's letter, and carried it to the house of doctor Murcia, having soon informed myself whereabouts he lived. Finding the little page who had been at our lodging at our door; brother (said I) don't you serve the daughter of Mr. doctor Murcia? When he answered in the affirmative, "You have such an obliging physiognomy (I replied) that I take the liberty to desire that you will deliver a love letter to your mistress."

The page asked from whom I brought it; and I no sooner told him that it came from Don Lewis de Pacheco, than he said, "Since it is so, follow me, I have orders to bring you in. Isabella wants to talk with you." I allowed myself therefore to be introduced into a closet, where I did not stay long before the lady appeared; and I was struck with the beauty of her face, having never beheld more delicate features. Her air was affected and childish; but for all that, she had walked without leading strings for thirty good years at least,—"Friend (said she to me, with a smiling air) do you belong to Don Lewis de Pacheco?" I answered, that I had been his valet de chambre these three weeks: and then delivered the fatal letter, which she read over twice or thrice, and seemed to distrust the evidence of her own senses. It is very certain she expected nothing less than such an
C 6
answer.

answer. She lifted up her eyes towards heaven, bit her lips, and for some time discovered by her countenance the pangs which her heart endured. When all of a sudden, addressing herself to me, "Friend (said she) is Don Lewis run mad? Tell me if you know why he writes to me in this gallant style! What dæmon possesses him? If he had a mind to break with me, could he not have done it without affronting me with such abusive letters?"

"Madam (said I) my master is certainly to blame; but he was in some measure forced to it. If you will promise to keep the secret, I will discover the whole mystery." "I do promise (said she, interrupting me with precipitation); don't be afraid of my exposing you, but freely explain yourself." Well then, (I resumed) this is briefly the affair. Immediately after he had received your letter, a lady covered with a very thick veil, came to our lodging, and asking for Signior de Pacheco, spoke with him in private a good while; and towards the close of the conversation, I overheard her say to him, "You swear to me that you will never see her again; but that is not all—You must also for my satisfaction, this instant, write to her a billet which I will dictate, and this I exact of you." Don Lewis did as she desired, then putting the letter into my hand, "Enquire (said he) where doctor Murcia de Lianna lives, and convey with address this paper to his daughter Isabella."—"So that you see, madam, (added I) this disobliging letter is the work of a rival, and consequently my master is not so much to blame." "O heaven! (cried she) he is more so than I imagined! his infidelity injures me more than the spiteful words which his hand wrote. Ah, the perfidious wretch! he has entered into other engagements.—But (added she, assuming a lofty air) let him abandon himself to his new flame, without constraint. I don't intend to thwart him. Tell him, that he had no occasion to insult me, in order to make me leave the field free to my rival; and that I despise
such

such a fickle lover too much, to have the least desire of recalling him." So saying, she dismissed me, and retired, very much irritated against Don Lewis:

While I went away, very well satisfied with myself, and persuaded that if I should set up for a genius, I should soon become a most dexterous cheat—I returned to our lodgings, where I found Mendoza and Pacheco at supper, conversing together as if they had been old acquaintance. Aurora, perceiving by my chearful countenance, that I had not acquitted myself ill of my commission; "So, thou art returned, Gil Blas (said she) gives us an account of thy message." Being obliged to trust to my own finesse again, I told them that I had delivered the packet with my own hand: and that Isabella, after having read the two billets doux which it contained, instead of seeming discontented, fell a laughing like one who had lost her senses; saying, "Upon my conscience, young noblemen have an admirable style! it must be owned, that other people don't write half so agreeably."—A fine way of disembarassing herself! (cried my mistress) she must certainly be a finished coquette. "As for me (said Don Lewis) I should never know Isabella by such behaviour: she must have entirely changed her character during my absence." I could not have thought her such a person indeed, (replied Aurora) but we must allow that there are women who can assume a great many different shapes: I was once in love with one of these, who made me her dupe a long time: Gil Blas, you can tell that she had an air of virtue, which might have deceived the whole world." "Yes, truly (said I, mingling in the conversation) she had a look that would have decoyed the most watry. I, myself, might have been trappanned by it."

The pretended Mendoza and Pacheco burst into a loud laugh, on hearing me talk thus: one, because I bore witness against an imaginary lady; and the other, on account of the expression I had used. We continued discoursing of women who have the art of dissembling;

dissembling ; and the result of our conversation was, that Isabella was accused in due form, and convicted of being an arrant jilt.

Don Lewis protested anew, that he would never see her, and Don Felix, by his example, swore he would always have the most perfect contempt for her. After these protestations, they professed a mutual friendship, and promised to conceal nothing from one another. Supper being over, they proceeded to compliments ; and at last, parted to go to bed, each in his own apartment. I followed Aurora to hers, where I gave an exact account of the conversation I had with the doctor's daughter ; not forgetting the least circumstance. I thought she would have embraced me in the transport of her joy. " Dear Gil Blas, (said she) I am charmed with thy understanding ! When one is so unfortunate as to be engaged in a passion which compels us to have recourse to stratagems, it is great advantage to have in our interests such a sensible young fellow as thee. Courage, my friend ; we have removed a rival who might have given us a world of trouble. That is no bad prognostic : but as lovers are subject to strange relapses, I think we must make a strong push, and bring Aurora de Guzman on the stage to-morrow." I approved of the scheme, and leaving Signior Don Felix with his page, retired to bed.

CH A P. VI.

The stratagems practised by Aurora, to captivate Don Lewis de Pacheco.

THE two new friends meeting next morning, began the day with embraces, which Aurora was obliged to give and receive, in order to act the part of Don Felix. They went out to walk, and I accompanied them with Chilindron, the valet of Don Lewis ; when stopping at the university to look at the titles of books that were pasted on the gate, which a good many

ny people amused themselves in reading, I perceived a little man among them, who gave his opinion of all the different works that were so published. I observed that he was heard with great attention, which I fancied at the same time, he believed was no more than his due : for he seemed vain and positive, as little men commonly are. " That new translation of Horace, (said he) which you see advertised in such large characters, is a work in prose, composed by an old college author ;—a book in great esteem among the students, who have already consumed four editions of it : and yet there is not one man of taste who has purchased so much as a single copy." His judgement was not a whit more favourable for the other books, which he ridiculed without exception. So that, in all likelihood, he was an author himself. I should not have been tired of hearing him to an end ; but was obliged to follow Don Lewis and Don Felix, who being as little pleased with his discourse, as interested in the books which he censured, left him to the enjoyment of his own criticism.

We came home at dinner-time, and my mistress, sitting down at table with Pacheco, artfully turned the conversation on her own family. " My father (said she) is a cadet of the house of Mendoza, and settled at Toledo ; my mother is sister to Donna Kimena de Gusman, who came to Salamanca some days ago, on an affair of importance, with her niece Aurora, the only daughter of don Vincent de Gusman, whom, perhaps, you know." " No, (replied Don Lewis) but I have often heard of him, as well as of your cousin Aurora. Am I to believe what is reported of her ? I have been assured that nothing equals her understanding but her beauty." " As for understanding (resumed Don Felix) she has a pretty good share, and that well cultivated ; but I don't think her so very handsome. People say that she and I very much resemble one another." " If that be the case, (cried Pacheco) she deserves the reputation she has got :
your

your features are regular; your cousin must be quite enchanting. I wish I had an opportunity of seeing and conversing with her." "I undertake to satisfy your curiosity, (replied the pretended Mendoza) and will carry you to my aunt's house this very afternoon." My mistress, all of a sudden, changed the discourse, and talked on indifferent subjects.—After dinner, while they were preparing to go and visit Donna Kimena, I was beforehand with them, and ran to advertise the duenna, that she might be ready to receive them; then returning instantly, accompanied Don Felix, who conducted Don Lewis to the house of his aunt. But they had scarce entered the house, when they met dame Kimena, who desired them by a sign, to make no noise. "Hush, hush, (said she, with a low voice) you will wake my niece, who has been tormented since yesterday with a terrible head-ach, which was just left her, and the poor child has been asleep about a quarter of an hour." "I am sorry for this disappointment, (said Mendoza); I was in good hopes of seeing my cousin, and had promised that pleasure to my friend Pacheco." "The affair is not very urgent, (replied Ortiz, smiling) you may defer it till to-morrow." The cavaliers conversed a little while with the old gentlewoman, and then retired.

Don Lewis carried us to the house of one of his friends, a gentleman, whose name was Don Gabriel de Pedros, with whom we spent the rest of the day, supped, and did not think of coming home till two o'clock in the morning. We had got about half way, when we stumbled over two men lying stretched upon the ground. Thinking they were unfortunate people, who had been assassinated, we stopped to give assistance provided it was not too late; and as we endeavoured to inform ourselves of their condition, as well as the darkness of the night would allow, the patrol came up; and the commander taking us at first for the murderers, ordered his men to surround us; but he con-

ceived

ceived a more favourable opinion of our morals, when he heard us speak, and, by the help of the dark lanthorn, saw the faces of Mendoza and Pacheco. His soldiers being ordered to examine the condition of the two men, who he fancied had been slain, found that it was a fat licentiate, with his man, both in liquor, or rather dead drunk. "Gentlemen, (cried one of the guard) I know this epicure: It is Signior the licentiate Guyomar, rector of your university: notwithstanding the pickle you see him in now, he is a great man, and a wonderful genius! There is not a philosopher in Salamanca whom he cannot confute in an argument. He has an unparalleled flow of words: 'tis pity that he is a little addicted to law suits, the bottle and a wench. He was no doubt on his return from supping with his Isabella, where unluckly his man getting as drunk as himself, they have both tumbled into the kennel. Before the good licentiate was rector, this misfortune frequently happened to him: and you see, honours don't always change the man." We left those drunkards in the hands of the patrolle, who undertook to carry them home, and returning to our lodgings, every one went to rest.

Don Felix and Don Lewis getting up about noon, Aurora was the first subject of their discourse. "Gil Blas, (said my mistress to me) go to my aunt Donna Kimena, and ask if Signior Pacheco and I can have the pleasure of seeing my cousin to day." I went out to acquit myself of this commission, or rather, to concert with the duenna what was to be done: and when we had taken our measures, I returned to the false Mendoza, saying. "Signior, your cousin Aurora is surprisngly well, and charged me to assure you from her, that your visit will be very agreeable; and Donna Kimena bid me assure Signior Pacheco, that he shall always be welcome at her house, on your account."

I perceived that Don Lewis was mightily pleased with these last words; my mistress observed the same; and

and drew a happy presage from her remark. Immediately before dinner, Signiora Kimena's valet appeared, and said to Don Felix, "Signior, a man from Toledo has been enquiring for you at your aunt's house, and left this note." The pretended Mendoza opened it, and read aloud these words; "If you are desirous of hearing news of your father, and of being made acquainted with other things of consequence to you, fail not, on receipt of this, to repair to the black horse near the university."—"I am, (said he) too curious to hear these things of consequence not to satisfy my desire instantly. Without taking leave of you, Pacheco (added he) if I don't return in two hours, you may go by yourself to my aunt's, and I will come to you there, after dinner. You know what Gil Blas has told you from Donna Kimena, and you have a right to make the visit." So saying he went out, and ordered me to follow him.

You may easily guess, that instead of going to the black horse, we took the road to the house where Ortiz lived, where, as soon as we arrived, Aurora took off her fair-coloured tour, washed and rubbed her eyes brows, dressed herself like a woman, and became a very handsome black-eyed lady, as she naturally was: for her disguise had changed her so much, that Aurora and Don Felix appeared to be two different people. She even seemed a great deal taller, as a woman, than as a man, to which, indeed her shoe-heels that were excessively high, contributed not a little. When she had improved her charms with all the assistance that art could bestow, she expected Don Lewis with an agitation composed of hope and fear. Sometimes she confided in her beauty and wit, and sometimes was afraid that her attempt would be unsuccessful. Ortiz, on the other side, summoned all her finess to second my mistress; and I, that Pacheco might not see me in the house, like those players who appear only in the last act, concealed myself till towards the end of the visit, by going out as soon as I had dined. In

In short, every thing was in order when Don Lewis arrived. He was received in a very agreeable manner by lady Kimena, and enjoyed a conversation with Aurora two or three hours long; at the end of which I came into the room where they were, and addressing myself to the cavalier, "Signior (said I) my master Don Felix, cannot be here to day: but begs you will excuse him, because he is in company with three men from Toledo, of whom he cannot disengage himself." "Ah, the little rake! (cried Donna Kimena) he is certainly set in to hard drinking." "No, madam (I replied) they are discoursing together of very serious affairs. He is heartily sorry that he cannot wait upon you; and ordered me to make his apology to you and Donna Aurora." "Oh! I'll have none of his apologies; (said my mistress) he knows I have been indisposed, and ought to shew a little more concern for his relation. In order to punish him for his indifference, he shan't see me these fifteen days." "Ah madam! (said Don Lewis) do not form such a cruel resolution: Don Felix is rather to be pitied for not being able to visit you."

They diverted themselves for some time with this subject, and then Pacheco withdrew. The fair Aurora immediately transformed herself, and resuming the appearance of a cavalier, returned to the lodgings as soon as she could. "I ask pardon, my dear friend; (said she to Don Lewis) for failing to meet you at my aunt's, but I could not get rid of the people in whose company I was: what consoles me for the disappointment, is, that you have at least had leisure to satisfy your curiosity. Well, what do you think of my cousin?" "I am enchanted by her! (answered Pacheco) you had reason to say she resembled you: I never saw features more alike: the same turn of face, the same eyes, the same mouth, and tone of voice! There is, however, some difference between you. Aurora is a little taller than you; she is black, and you are fair. You are merry, and she is grave. These are what distinguish

distinguish you the one from the other. As for understanding (added he) I do not believe a celestial being can have more than your cousin. In a word, she is a lady of accomplished merit."

Signior Pacheco pronounced these last words with so much vivacity, that Don Felix said, smiling, "Friend, I advise you for the sake of your repose, to go no more to Donna Kimena's. Aurora de Gusman may make your heart ache, and inspire you with a passion." "There is no occasion for another sight of her, to make me in love, (said he, interrupting him) that is done already." "I am sorry for it (replied the pretended Mendoza) for you are not one of those who can attach themselves to one, and my cousin is no Isabella. I can assure you beforehand, that she will never listen to a lover, except on honourable terms." "Honourable terms! (replied Don Lewis) sure no body would offer any other to a young lady of her birth. Alas! I should think myself the happiest of men, if she would approve of my addresses, and consent to join her destiny with mine!"

"Since you talk in that stile (said Don Felix) I am interested in your behalf. Yes, I list myself in your service—Offer you all my influence with Aurora, and will to-morrow bring over my aunt, who has a great sway over her." Pacheco returned a thousand thanks to the cavalier who made him such fair promises; and we perceived with joy, that our stratagem could not succeed better. Next day, we increased the love of Don Lewis, by a new invention. My mistress having been with Donna Kimena, on pretence to render her favourable to that cavalier, came back and said to him, "I have spoke to my aunt, whom with much difficulty, I have made your friend. She was furiously prejudiced against you: for some body or other had made her believe that you was a downright libertine: but I undertook your defence with eagerness, and at last destroyed the bad impression she had received of your morals."

"This

" This is not all; (pursued Aurora) you must talk with my aunt, in my presence, and then we shall make sure of her assistance." Pacheco expressed extreme impatience to discourse with Donna Kimena, and that satisfaction was granted to him next morning, when the false Mendoza conducted him to madam Ortiz, and they three had a long conversation; in which Don Lewis shewed that he had allowed himself to be very much captivated in a very little time. The artful Kimena feigned to be moved with all the tenderness he expressed, and promised her utmost endeavour to engage her niece to marry him. Pacheco immediately threw himself at the feet of such a kind aunt, and thanked her for her friendship: whereupon Don Felix asked if his cousin was up? " No, (answered the duenna) she is still a-bed, and you cannot see her at present, but return this afternoon, and you may converse with her at leisure." This answer of madam Kimena redoubled, as you may well believe, the joy of Don Lewis, who thought the rest of the forenoon extremely tedious, and went back to his lodgings with Mendoza, who was not a little pleased with observing in him all the marks of genuine love.

They talked of nothing but Aurora, and when they had dined, Don Felix said to Pacheco, " There's a thought come into my head. I am of opinion, that I should go to my aunt's some minutes before you, and have a little chat with my cousin, that I may, if possible, discover the disposition of her heart towards you." Don Lewis approving this scheme, let his friend go before, and did not set out till an hour after. So, my mistress made such good use of her time, that she was dressed like a lady when her lover arrived: " I thought (said the cavalier, after having saluted Aurora and the duenna) to have found Don Felix here." " You will see him immediately (answered Donna Kimena) he is writing in my closet."—Upon which, Pacheco seemed to swallow the trick, and entered into conversation with the ladies. But notwithstanding

standing the presence of his beloved object, he perceived that the hours stole away, without Mendoza's appearing; and as he could not help testifying some surprize at it, Aurora changing countenance all of a sudden, began to laugh, and said to Don Lewis, "Is it possible that you have no suspicion of the trick which has been played upon you? Do an artificial light-coloured tour, and painted eye-brows, make me so unlike myself, that you have been mistaken by them hitherto? Undeceive yourself Pacheco, (continued she, resuming an air of gravity) and know that Don Felix de Mendoza and Aurora de Gusman are but one and the same person."

She was not contented with extricating him out of this error, but also owned her passion for him, and informed him of all the steps she had taken towards its success. Don Lewis, no less charmed than surprized with what he heard, threw himself at her feet, exclaiming in a transport of joy, "Ah, beautiful Aurora! may I then believe myself the happy mortal whom you have favoured so much? How shall I recompence your goodness, which the most perfect love can never enough repay?" These words were accompanied with a thousand more passionate and tender expressions: after which, the two lovers conferred upon the measures that were to be taken towards the accomplishment of their mutual desires; and it was resolved that we should set out immediately for Madrid, and bring our comedy to a conclusion by marriage. This design was no sooner formed than put in execution: in fifteen days, Don Lewis espoused my mistress, and their nuptials gave rise to entertainments and infinite rejoicings.

CHAP. VII.

Gil Blas quits his place, and goes into the service of Don Gonzales de Pacheco.

THREE weeks after this marriage, my mistress being desirous of recompensing me for the service I had done her, made me a present of an hundred pistoles, saying, "Gil Blas, my friend, far from turning you away, I leave it to your choice to stay with me as long as you please; but my husband's uncle, Don Gonzales de Pacheco, wants to have you for a valet de chambre. I spoke to him so advantageously of you, that he assured me, I would do him a favour in parting with you to him. He is an old nobleman (added she) of an excellent character, and you will be quite happy in his service."

I thanked Aurora for her generosity, and as she had no longer any occasion for me, accepted the post to which I was recommended; the more willingly as I should be still in the family. One morning therefore, I went with a message from my new married mistress to Signior Don Gonzales, who was still a-bed, though it was near twelve o'clock. When I entered his chamber, I found him taking some broth which a page had brought in. The old gentleman's whiskers were in papers, his eyes almost quite extinguished, and his face pale and meagre. He was one of those old boys who have been great rakes in their youth, and are not a whit more sedate in their old age. He received me with great civility, and told me that if I would serve him with as much zeal as I had manifested for his niece, I might depend upon living happily. I promised to have the same attachment to him which I had for her, and that moment he engaged me in his service.

Behold me then with a new master, and heaven knows what sort of a man he was! When he got up, I fancied I saw the resurrection of Lazarus. Paint to your own imagination, a tall body so lean and withered
that

that when it was naked an anatomist might have taught osteology upon it, with legs so small that they looked like spindles, after he had put on three or four pair of stockings. This living mummy was besides troubled with an asthma, and coughed at every word he spoke. Having drank chocolate, he called for paper and ink, and wrote a letter which he sealed and sent away, according to the direction, by the page who had brought the broth; then turning to me, "Friend, said he, thou art the person whom I intend henceforth to trust with my commissions, especially those which regard Donna Euphrasia, a young lady whom I love, and who is passionately fond of me."

"Good God! said I to myself, how can young people help believing themselves beloved, when this old dotard thinks himself adored!" "Gil Blas, added he, thou shalt go with me this very day to her house, where I sup almost every night, and thou wilt be charmed with her prudence, and reserve; far from resembling those silly coquettes who can relish nothing but youth, and are won by appearances only, she has an understanding already mature and judicious, that consults the sentiments of a man, and prefers a lover of delicacy and taste to one of the most shining exteriors." Signior Don Gonzales did not here finish the eulogium of his mistress, whom he represented as the epitome of all perfection. But he had a hearer not easily persuaded. After the conduct of the actresses, which I had seen, I did not look upon old noblemen as people very happy in their amours. I pretended, however, out of complaisance, to believe all that my master said. I did more; I extolled the discernment and taste of Euphrasia; and was even impudent enough to affirm, that she could not have a more amiable gallant.

The good old gentleman did not perceive that I made game of him; but on the contrary, applauded my good sense. So true it is, that a sycophant may run any risk with the great, who swallow all kind of flattery;

flattery, let it be ever so absurd. The old man having written his letter, pulled some hairs out of his beard with a pair of pincers, cleaned his eyes of a thick gum that filled them, washed his ears and hands, and after having performed his ablutions, painted his whiskers, eyebrows, and hair, of a black colour; continuing longer at his toilet than an old widow who studies to hide the outrage of time upon her. Just as he had done dressing, another gentlemen in years, one of his friends, entered, whose name was the Count d'Asumar. But he, far from concealing his grey hairs, supported himself on a cane, and seemed to glory in his old age, rather than in appearing young. "Signior Pacheco, said he as he came in, I am come to dine with you." "You are very welcome, Count," answered my master. Mean while, having embraced one another, they sat down, and entered into conversation till such time as dinner was ready.

The discourse turned, at first, upon a bull-feast, which had been celebrated a few days before; and as they mentioned the cavaliers who had shewn the greatest vigour and address, the old Count, like another Nestor, who from talking of the present always took occasion to praise the past, said, with a sigh, "Alas! I see no men now-a-days comparable to those I have known heretofore; and the tournaments are not performed with half the magnificence that they were when I was a young man." I laughed within myself at the prejudice of honest Signior d'Asumar, who did not confine it to tournaments only; but, I remember, when the desert was set upon the table, seeing some fine peaches served up, he observed, "In my time the peaches were much larger than they are at present; nature degenerates every day." "At that rate, said Don Gonzales smiling, the peaches of Adam's time must have been wonderfully large."

Count d'Asumar staid almost the whole day with my master, who no sooner found himself disengaged, than he went out, bidding me follow him. He went to Euphrasia's, who lodged at the distance of an hundred paces from our house, and found her in a very handsome apartment. She was gaily dressed, and had such a youthful air, that I concluded she was under age, although she was good thirty years old, at least. She was really handsome, and her understanding soon raised my admiration: for she was not one of those coquettes who have nothing to recommend them but idle ribaldry, and loose behaviour; she was modest in her manners, as well as in her conversation, and talked with a great deal of wit, without the least affectation. O heaven! said I to myself, is it possible that a person of such delicacy can be a lady of pleasure! I imagined that impudence was inseparable from all women of her profession, and was astonished to see one with the appearance of modesty; not reflecting that these princesses know how to assume any shape, and accommodate themselves to the characters of people of fortune and nobility that fall into their hands. When their gallants are pleased with fire and transport, they are brisk and petulant; and with those who love reserve, practise a prudent and virtuous behaviour: they are the true cameleons, who change colour according to the humour and disposition of the men whom they approach.

Don Gonzales was none of those noblemen who are taken with your bold beauties: he could not bear ladies of that class; on the contrary, could relish no woman, unless she had the appearance of a vestal. Euphrasia, therefore, modelled herself accordingly, and shewed, that all the good actresses are not employed in the theatre. Leaving my master with his nymph, I went down stairs into a hall, where I found an old chambermaid, whom I had known a waiting-woman to an actress. Recollecting me immediately,

mediately, she said, "What! is it you Gil Blas? you have quitted Arsenia, it seems, as I did Constantia." "Yes, truly, answered I, it is a long time since I left her, and went to serve a young lady of fashion. A player's life is not to my taste: and therefore I dismissed myself, without deigning to come to the least explanation with Arsenia." "You was in the right, replied the chambermaid, whose name was Beatrice; I served Constantia pretty much in the same manner: one morning early I gave in my accounts, very coldly, which she received without uttering one syllable, and so we parted cavalierly enough."

"I am extremely glad, said I, that we now meet in a more honourable house: Donna Euphrasia seems to be a sort of woman of fashion, and I believe her character is very good." "You are not at all mistaken, said the old waiting-woman: She is of a very good family, and as for her temper, I can assure you there never was one more equal and sweet. She is none of those passionate and difficult mistresses, who find fault with every thing, scold incessantly, torment their domestics, and, in one word, make a hell of their service. I never once heard her grumble; but when I happen to do any thing contrary to her inclinations, she reproves me without rage, and never lets one of those epithets escape her, of which your violent dames are so liberal." "My master, I resumed, is also very sweet tempered: he's the best natured mortal alive, and therefore you and I are much more happy than in the service of actresses." "A thousand times more happy, replied Beatrice! Instead of leading a life of noise and tumult, I now live, as it were, in a retreat. No man enters these doors but Signior Don Gonzales. I shall see nobody but you in my solitude, for which I am not at all sorry; for I have had an affection for you a long time, and, more than once, envied the happiness of Laura, in having you for a gallant. But, in short, I hope to be as happy as she; for, though I

have neither her youth nor her beauty, by way of amends, I have coquetry, and am as faithful as a turtle."

As honest Beatrice was one of those persons who are obliged to make a tender of their favours, because nobody will ask them, I was not at all tempted to profit by her advances: I did not desire, however, that she should perceive my contempt, and was even polite enough to express myself in such a manner, as that she did not lose all hopes of engaging my heart. I imagined, then, that I had made a conquest of an old chamber-maid, but happened, on this occasion, to be deceived: she did not behave in this manner to me for my own sake only; her design was to inspire me with love, that she might bring me over to the interest of her mistress, for whom she was so zealous, that she did not mind what it cost her, in promoting her advantage. I found my error next morning, when I carried a billet-doux from my master to Euphrasia. That lady gave me a most gracious reception, and said a thousand obliging things, in which she was joined by her maid: one admiring my physiognomy, while the other observed in me an air of prudence and sagacity. According to them, Signior Don Gonzales possessed a treasure, in having such a valet. In a word, they praised me so much, that I suspected their applause, and even discerned the motives of it; but I received it, in appearance, with all the simplicity of a fool, and by this counterplot effectually deceived the sharpers, who, at last, pulled off the mask.

"Heark'ee, Gil Blas (said Euphrasia to me) it depends upon thyself to make thy fortune. Let us act in concert, my friend. Don Gonzales is old, and his constitution so crazy, that the least touch of a fever, assisted by an able physician, will carry him off. Let us make the best of the little time he has left, and exert ourselves so, as that he may leave the best part of his estate to me. Thou shalt have a good share of the booty, and thou mayest depend upon my promise, as

much

much as if I had made it before all the notaries of Madrid." "Madam (answered I) you may command your humble servant. You have nothing to do, but to prescribe my conduct, and you shall be satisfied." "Very well, (she replied) thou must observe thy matter, and give me an account of all his proceedings: when you talk to him in private, don't fail to turn the conversation upon women, and from thence artfully take occasion to speak well of me. Ply him with Euphrasia as much as possible; and I again recommend it to you, to be very attentive to what passes in the family of the Pacheco's: if you perceive that any relation of Don Gonzales is extremely officious about him, and aims at the succession to his estate, acquaint me with it immediately; that is all I ask, and I warrant I shall send him a drift in a very little time; for I know the different characters of his relations, and the ridiculous lights in which they may be represented to him: having already prejudiced him pretty successfully against all his nephews and cousins."

By these instructions, and others which Euphrasia added, I concluded, that this lady was one of those who attach themselves to generous old men. She had lately prevailed upon Don Gonzales to sell an estate, the price of which she had converted to her own use; she extorted from him valuable moveables every day, and, besides, had reason to hope that she would not be forgotten in his will. I pretended to engage willingly, to do all that she desired; and, dissimulation apart, doubted within myself, on my return home, whether I should contribute to impose upon my master, or undertake to detach him from his mistress. The last of these resolutions seemed more honourable than the other, and I felt myself more inclined to fulfil than betray my duty; besides, Euphrasia had made me no positive promise, and that, perhaps, was the occasion of my fidelity's remaining uncorrupted. I resolved, therefore, to serve Don Gonzales with

zeal, persuading myself, that if I should be lucky enough to divert his affection from his idol, I should be better rewarded for this good action than for all the bad ones I could commit.

That I might the more easily accomplish what I proposed, I shewed myself intirely devoted to the service of Donna Euphrasia: I made her believe, that I spoke of her incessantly to my master; and accordingly invented fables, which she took for sterling truth. I insinuated myself so much into her good graces, that she thought me intirely in her interest, and still the better to impose upon her, affected to appear in love with Beatrice, who, ravaged to see, at her age, a young lover at her beck, did not much mind being deceived, provided she was deceived agreeably. When my master and I were each with his own princess, we composed two very different pictures in the same taste. Don Gonzales, pale and withered as I have represented him, when he attempted to ogle, looked like a wretch in his last agonies; and my infant, in proportion to the seeming increase of my passion, assumed still more and more childish airs, and practised all the artifice of an old coquet, which she had been learning forty years at least; having been refined in the service of some of those heroines of gallantry, who can please even in their old age, and die loaded with the spoils of two or three generations.

I was not satisfied with following my master, every evening, to the house of Euphrasia; I sometimes went thither, alone, by day; but at what hour soever I went in, I never met with any man, or woman either, of a suspicious appearance; nor could I discover the least trace of infidelity, a circumstance that surprized me not a little; for I could not imagine that such a handsome lady could be exactly true to Don Gonzales. And in this, surely, my judgment was not too rash; for the fair Euphrasia, (as you will presently see) that she might wait with the more patience

for

for my master's estate, was provided with a lover more agreeable to a woman of her age.

One morning, when I carried, as usual, a letter to the princess, I perceived, while I was in her chamber, the feet of a man concealed behind the tapestry. I went away, without seeming to observe them; but although I ought not to be surprized at this object, which was no business of mine, I did not fail to resent it. Ah, perfidious wretch! said I to myself, in a passion, ah, wicked Euphrasia! thou art not satisfied with imposing upon a good old gentleman, by persuading him that he is beloved, but thou must also crown thy perfidy, by abandoning thyself to another! What a fool was I, now I think on it, to moralize in this manner! I ought rather to have laughed at the adventure, and looked upon it as a compensation for the tiresome, languid moments she underwent in her commerce with my master: I should, at least, have done better in holding my tongue, than in seizing this occasion of acting the conscientious valet; but instead of moderating my zeal, I entered warmly into the interest of Don Gonzales, to whom I made a faithful report of what I had seen: I even added, that Euphrasia wanted to seduce me; I concealed nothing of what she had said on that occasion, and it was his own fault if he was not perfectly acquainted with the character of his mistress. He was confounded at the information, and a small emotion of wrath appeared on his countenance, seemed to presage that the lady should not be unfaithful to him with impunity. "Enough, Gil Blas, said he, I am extremely sensible of thy attachment, and pleased with thy fidelity; I will go instantly to Euphrasia, load her with reproaches, and break for ever with the ungrateful creature." So saying, he went out accordingly, and dispensed with my attendance, that he might spare me the disagreeable part I had to play, during their *eclaircissement*.

I waited for my master's return with a world of

impatience, not doubting, that as he had so much cause to complain of his nymph, he would come back altogether detached from her allurements. On this supposition, I applauded myself for what I had done; I represented to myself the satisfaction which the natural heirs of Don Gonzales would have, when they learned that their kinsman was no longer the sport of a passion so contrary to their interests: I flattered myself, that they would consider me for it, and, in short, that I had distinguished myself from other valets, who are usually more apt to encourage their masters in debauchery than to reclaim them. I was in love with honour, and reflected, with pleasure, that I should pass for the Corypheus of all domestics. But this idea, agreeable as it was, vanished in a few hours, when my patron arriving, said, "Friend, I have had a very sharp conversation with Euphrasia, who affirms, that thou hast misrepresented her, and art, if she is to be believed, no other than an impostor, altogether devoted to my nephews, out of regard to whom thou sparest nothing to make me quarrel with her. I saw real tears trickle from her eyes, and she swore by all that was sacred, that she never made any proposals to thee, nor ever sees a man. Beatrice, who seems to be a good girl, protested the same thing, in such a manner that my anger was appeased in spite of my teeth."

"How, Sir! said I, interrupting him in a sorrowful manner, do you doubt my sincerity? do you distrust"—"No child, said he, interrupting me in his turn, I do thee all manner of justice; I don't believe thee in a confederacy with my nephews. I am persuaded that thou art concerned for my interest only, and I am obliged to thee: but appearances are deceitful. Perhaps what thou sawest existed only in thy own imagination; and, in that case thou mayest guess how disagreeable thy accusation must be to Euphrasia. Be it as it may, she is a person whom I cannot help loving. I must even make the sacrifice

to her which she demands, and that sacrifice is thy dismissal. I am sorry for it, my poor Gil Blas, added he, and I assure thee, I consented to it with regret: but I could not do otherwise. What ought to console thee is, that I shall not send thee away un-recompensed: and I intend moreover to settle thee with a lady, a friend of mine, where thou wilt live very agreeably."

I was very much mortified to see my zeal thus turned against myself: I cursed Euphrasia, and deplored the weakness of Don Gonzales, who allowed himself to be led by the nose. The good old man being very sensible, that in turning me away merely to please his mistress, he did not behave in the most manly manner, made me amends for his effeminacy, and gilded the pill I was to swallow with fifty ducats. Next day carrying me to the marchioness of Chaves, he told her in my hearing, that I was a young man who possessed many good qualities: that he had a regard for me, but family-reasons not permitting him to keep me in his service, he begged she would admit me into her family. She received me that instant into the number of her domestics; so that I found myself translated all of a sudden into a new place.

C H A P. VIII.

The character of the marchioness of Chaves, and of those people who usually visited her.

THE marchioness of Chaves was a widow of five and thirty, handsome, tall, and well shaped, who enjoyed a yearly income of ten thousand ducats, without the care and incumbrance of children. I never saw a woman of more gravity, or one who spoke less, though this did not hinder her from being looked upon as the most witty lady in Madrid. The great concourse of people of quality, and men of learning, who daily frequented her house, contributed, per-

haps, more than any thing she said, to give her this reputation. But this I will not undertake to decide: let it suffice to say, that her name imported the idea of a superior genius, and that her house was called, by way of excellence, the court of criticism.

There was actually some performance or other read here every day; sometimes new plays, and sometimes other pieces of poetry: but nothing except serious subjects were deemed worthy of attention, humorous pieces being despised; the best comedy, or the most ingenious or witty romance was looked upon as a feeble production, that deserved no praise; whereas, the least serious work, such as an ode, eclogue, or sonnet, passed for the greatest effort of human understanding. But it often happened that the public did not confirm the sentence of the court; on the contrary, was sometimes so impolite as to hiss those pieces which had been there very much applauded.

I was chamberlain in this house; that is, my office consisted in getting every thing ready in the apartment of my lady, for the reception of company, and to set the chairs for the men, and the cushions for the women; after which I stationed myself at the chamber door, to announce* and introduce the persons who arrived. While I was employed in this office for the first time, the governor of the pages, who, by accident, was then in the antichamber with me, described them all very pleasantly, as they came in. His name was Andrew Molina, naturally dry and satirical, with a good share of understanding. A bishop, being the first who presented himself, I announced him, and when he was entered, the governor observed, "That prelate is a man of very pleasant cha-

* The announcer is a domestic who stands in the hall, on visiting-days, and pronounces aloud the names of the company as they come in: from the Latin word *anunciare*.

rafter.

rafter. Having a little credit at court, he would fain make every one believe that he has a great deal, and offers his interest to all the world, without serving any body. One day meeting at court with a gentleman who saluted him, he stopt, loaded him with civilities, and squeezing his hand, said, "I am wholly devoted to your service: pray, Sir, put me to the proof: I shall never die satisfied until I have an opportunity of obliging you." The gentleman having thanked him in a very grateful manner, they parted, and the prelate said to one of his followers, "I think I know that man: I have a confused idea of having seen him somewhere."

Immediately after the bishop, the son of a grandee appeared; and when I had introduced him into my lady's chamber, "That nobleman, said Molina, is an original. You must know that he goes often to a house in order to treat of some important affair with the gentleman who lives in it, and comes away without remembering to speak a syllable about the matter. But, added the governor, seeing the two ladies advance, there come Donna Angela de Pennafiel, and Donna Margarita de Montalvan, two ladies, between whom there is not the least resemblance: Donna Margarita, who piques herself on being a philosopher, will undertake the most profound doctors of Salamanca in a dispute, without suffering their arguments to get the better of her argumentation. As for Donna Angela, she does not affect the virtuosi, although her understanding is perfectly well cultivated; her conversation is sensible, her sentiments refined, and her expressions delicate, noble, and natural." "This last is an amiable character, said I to Molina; but the other, in my opinion, is inconsistent with the fair sex." Not very consistent, he replied, with a sneer, and even a great many men are rendered ridiculous by such a disposition. Madam, the marchioness, our lady, continued he, is also a little tainted with philosophy. What wrangling will there be

here to-day ! God grant that religion may not be concerned in the dispute."

As he spoke these words, we perceived a meagre man come in, with an air of reserve and grim countenance. My governor did not spare him : " This here, said he, is one of your serious wits, who would fain pass for for great geniuses, by the favour of a few sentences learned from Seneca, and who are easily detected to be fools, if you examine them a little closely." The next that came in was a well-shaped cavalier, with a Grecian mien, that is, a self-sufficient appearance : when I asked who he was, Molina answered, " He is a dramatic poet, who has composed, in his time, an hundred thousand verses, which never brought him in four-pence : but in recompence for that he has procured a considerable settlement, by six lines of prose."

I was going to inform myself of the nature of a fortune got so easily, when I heard a great noise on the stair-case. " Good ! cried the governor, there comes the licentiate Campanario, who gives notice of his approach before he appears, and beginning to talk at the street-door, continues without intermission until he goes away." Sure enough, the whole house rung again with the voice of the thundering licentiate, who at length, entered the antichamber with a batchelor of his acquaintance, and did not leave off speaking all the time the visit lasted. " Signior Campanario, said I to Molina, seems to be a great genius." " Yes, replied my governor, he has some bright fallies, quaint expressions, and a good deal of humour : but over and above his being an unconscionable talker, he does not fail to make repetitions ; and not to overrate his talents his talents, I believe the agreeable and comic air with which he seasons every thing he says, constitute his chief merit : for the greatest part of his strokes would do no great honour to a collection of witticisms."

Abundance of other people came in, of whom Molina

lina made very humorous pictures, among which, he did not forget that of the marchioness. "I assure you, said he, our patroness is a lady of a very even temper, in spite of all her philosophy. She is not at all difficult to please, and one undergoes very few caprices in her service. She is one of the most reasonable women of quality I know, and is even without passion; she has as little taste for gallantry as for play, and loves conversation only; in short, most ladies would think her way of life insupportably tiresome." The governor, by this eulogium, prepossessed me in favour of my mistress; nevertheless, some days after, I could not help suspecting that she was not such an enemy to love: and I will declare on what foundation my suspicion was built.

One morning, while she was at her toilet, a little man presented himself to me, about forty years old, of a disagreeable figure, more dirty than the author Pedro de Noya, and very much hump backed into the bargain. When he told me he wanted to speak with the marchioness, I asked him, from whom? To which he answered, with a haughty look, "From myself; tell her, I am the gentleman of whom she spoke yesterday to Donna de Velasco." I introduced him into my lady's apartment, and signified his arrival; upon which, she immediately exclaimed in a transport of joy, "Shew him in." She not only gave him a favourable reception, but likewise ordered all her women out of the room; so that the little hunch back, more happy than an honest man, remained alone with her; while the chambermaids and I made ourselves merry with this fine tête à tête that lasted near an hour; after which my patroness dismissed the crook back, loaded with civilities, that shewed how well she was satisfied with his conversation, which in effect, captivated her so much, that she told me one evening in private, "Gil Blas, when the man with the hump returns, bring him into my apartments as secretly as possible." I obeyed, and when the little
man

man came back next morning, conducted him by a private stair-case, to my lady's-chamber. I performed the same office most devoutly, two or three times, without suspecting that there could be any gallantry in the case. But the malignity which is so natural to mankind, soon inspired me with strange ideas, and I concluded that the inclination of the marchioness was either very whimsical, or that the hunch-back acted the part of a go-between.

Prepossessed with this opinion, I often said to myself, "If my lady is in love with a handsome man, I forgive her: but if she is captivated by this baboon, truly, I cannot excuse the depravity of her taste." How much was I mistaken in my patroness! The little hunch-back dabbled in magic, and as his skill had been extolled to the marchioness, who willingly listened to the delusions of such impostors, she honoured him with these private conversations, in which he shewed her things in a glass, taught her to turn the sieve, and for money revealed all the mysteries of the cabala. Or rather, to speak truly, he was a sharper who subsisted at the expence of credulous people, and was said to have several women of quality under contribution.

C H A P. IX.

The incident; in consequence of which Gil Blas quitted the marchioness de Chaves; and the course he followed afterwards.

I HAD already lived six months with the marchioness de Chaves, and I confess, was satisfied with my condition; but the destiny I had to fulfil, would not permit me to live longer in that lady's house, nor even in Madrid: I will therefore recount the adventure that obliged me to remove from both.

Among my lady's maids, there was one called Portia, who besides her youth and beauty, possessed such an amiable character, that I attached myself to her, without knowing that I must dispute her heart with a

rival.

rival. The secretary of the marchioness, who was a proud man, and very much addicted to jealousy, being captivated with my princess, no sooner perceived my passion, than (without endeavouring to find out my reception with Portia) he resolved to fight me in single combat, and for this purpose appointed me to meet one morning, in a private place. As he was a little man, whose head scarce reached my shoulders, and seemed at the same time very weak, I did not think him a very dangerous rival, but repaired with great confidence to the place appointed, in hopes of gaining an easy victory, and making a merit of it with Portia; but the event did not answer my expectation. The little secretary, who had been two or three years at the fencing school, disarmed me like an infant, and holding the point of his sword to my throat, "Prepare (said he) for the mortal blow, or else give me thy word of honour, that thou wilt this day quit the service of the marchioness de Chaves, and never more think of Portia." I made him that promise, and kept it without reluctancy; being ashamed to appear before the rest of the servants after my defeat, especially before the fair Helen who had been the cause of our duel. My sole intention in returning to the house, was to carry off my goods and my money, which having done, I set out the same day for Toledo, my purse being pretty well furnished, and my back loaded with a bundle composed of my whole wearing apparel: for though I had not engaged to quit Madrid, I thought proper to leave it, at least for some years; and formed the resolution of making the tour of Spain, and of halting at every town. "The money I have (said I to myself) will carry me a great way; for I don't intend to be extravagant, and when I have no more, I will betake myself again to service. A young man of my accomplishments will find places in abundance, whenever he pleases to go in quest of them."

I longed, in particular, to see Toledo, whither I

arrived

arrived at the end of three days, and took up my lodging in a good inn, where I passed for a gentleman of consequence, by the favour of my intriguing dress, which I did not fail to put on, and by the foppish airs which I affected. It was in my own option to establish a correspondence with some handsome women who lived in the neighbourhood; but understanding that I must begin by spending a good deal of money upon them, I bridled my desires, and feeling still a strong inclination for travelling, after having seen every thing that was curious in Toledo, I left it one morning by break of day, and took the road to Cuenca, with an intention to go to Arragon. On the second day of my journey, I went into an inn on the road, and just as I sat down to refresh myself, a company of soldiers belonging to the holy brotherhood came in, and calling for wine, fell a drinking. While they were over their cups, I heard them describe a young man whom they had orders to apprehend. "The gentleman (said one of them) is no more than twenty years of age; has long black hair, a good shape, an aquiline nose, and is mounted on a bay horse."

I listened, without seeming to give attention to what they said, and truly, I did not concern myself much about the matter. Leaving them in the inn, I set forward on my journey, and had not walked a quarter of a league, when I met a young gentleman of a good mien, mounted on a chestnut-coloured horse. "Upon my faith! (said I to myself) this is the man whom the soldiers are in search of: he has long black hair, and an aquiline nose. I must do him a good office. Sir, (said I to him) give me leave to ask, whether or not you have some affair of honour on your hands? The young gentleman, without making any reply, looked earnestly at me, and seemed surprized at my question. Upon which, I assured him, that it was not out of curiosity that I had addressed him in this manner; and he was very well convinced of it, when I told him, what I had overheard at the inn. "Generous stranger

ger (said he) I will not deny that I have reason to believe myself the person whom these soldiers want to apprehend; and therefore will take another road, in order to avoid them." "It is my opinion (I replied) that we should immediately seek some place where you may be secure, and where we may be sheltered from that storm which I see brewing in the air, and which will burst very soon." At that instant we discovered and repaired to a tufted alley of trees that conducted us to the foot of a mountain, where we found an hermitage.

It was a large deep grotto that time had scooped in the rock, to which the art of man had added a kind of front, built of pebbles and shell-work, and quite covered with turf: the adjacent field was strewed with a thousand sorts of flowers which perfumed the air, and hard by the grotto we perceived a little opening in the rock, from whence issued with an agreeable noise, a spring of water that run winding along a meadow. At the entrance of this solitary habitation, appeared a holy hermit stooping under the weight of old age, supporting himself with a staff on one hand, and holding in the other a rosary of large beads, composed of twenty courses at least. His head was buried in a brown woolen cap, with long ears, and his beard, more white than snow, came down to his middle. When we approached him, "Father, (said I) be so good as to favour us with shelter from the impending storm." "Enter my children (replied the anchorite, after having observed me attentively) this hermitage is at your service; and you may stay here as long as you please. As for your horse, (added he, pointing to the fore-part of his habitation) he will be very well accommodated in that place." The gentleman who accompanied me, disposed of his beast accordingly, and then we followed the old man into the grotto, which as soon as we had entered, a great shower fell, mingled with flashes of lightning, and dreadful claps of thunder. The hermit fell on his knees before an
image

image of St. Pacomo*, which was glued to the wall and we followed his example. Mean while the thunder ceased, and we got up; but as the rain continued, and the day was far spent, "My children, said the old man, I would not advise you to proceed on your journey in such weather, unless you have some pressing affair." The young man and I replied, that we had none that hindered us from halting, and that if we were not afraid of incommoding him, we would beg leave to pass the night in his hermitage. "You won't incommode me in the least, said the hermit, but will have reason to complain of your lodging; for you must lie hard, and I have nothing to offer you but anchorite's fare.

So saying, the holy man made us sit down at a small table, and presenting us with a few onions, a crust of bread, and a pitcher of water, "My sons, said he, you see my usual repast; but to-day I will commit an excess, out of regard to you." He then brought a little cheese, with two handfuls of silberds, and spread them upon the table. The young man, who had no great appetite, did not much honour to the feast; upon which the hermit observed to him, "I perceive that you are accustomed to better tables than mine, or rather, that sensuality has corrupted your natural taste. I have been in the world, as you are now: the most delicate viands, the most exquisite ragouts, were not too good for my palate: but since I have lived in solitude, I have recovered the former purity of my taste, and at present can relish
nothing

* St. Pacomo was an Egyptian, who lived in the fourth century, and founded several monasteries, consisting of between twelve and sixteen hundred monks each: his faith is said to have been so effectual, that he walked among serpents unhurt; and when he had, occasion to cross the Nile, was transported from one side to the other, on the back of a crocodile.

nothing but roots, fruits, milk ; in a word, that which composed the nourishment of our first parents."

While he spoke in this manner, the young man sunk into a profound reverie, which the hermit perceiving, " My son, said he to him, you have an oppression on your spirits ; may I not know the cause ? unbosom yourself to me. It is not curiosity, but charity alone that animates my request. I am of age to give advice ; and perhaps your situation requires it." " Yes, father, replied the cavalier, with a sigh, I have, doubtless, occasion for advice, and I will follow yours, since you are so good as to offer it. I believe, I run no risk in discovering myself to a man of your character." " No, my son, said the senior, you have nothing to fear on that score and may safely trust me with any secret." In this confidence, the cavalier spoke as follows.

C H A P. X.

The story of Don Alphonso and the fair Seraphina.

I WILL conceal nothing from you, father, nor from the other gentleman who hears me ; for after the generosity he shewed, I should be to blame to distrust him. Listen, therefore, to my misfortunes. I was born in Madrid, and my origin is this — An officer of the German guards, called the Baron de Steinbach, going home one evening, perceived a bundle of white linen at the foot of the stair-case. He took it up, and carried it to his wife's apartment, where he found it to be a new-born infant, wrapped in very handsome swaddling-cloaths ; with a billet importing, that it belonged to persons of quality, who would one day make themselves known ; and that it had been baptized by the name of Alphonso. I am that unhappy infant ; and this is all I know of my birth and parentage : sacrificed to honour or infidelity, I know not whether my mother exposed me, in order to conceal a dishonourable flame ; or, seduced by a per-
jured

jured lover, found herself under the cruel necessity of disowning the fruit of her womb.

Be that as it will, the baron and his lady were touched with my situation, and as they had no children of their own, determined to educate me under the name of Don Alphonso. As I advanced in years, their attachment to me increased: my flattering and complaisant behaviour attracted their caresses every moment: in a word, I had the good fortune to make myself beloved; they gave me all kinds of masters; my education became their only study; and far from expecting impatiently, that my parents would discover themselves, they seemed, on the contrary, to wish that my birth would always remain a secret. As soon as the baron found me able to carry arms, he entered me in the service, procured for me an ensign's commission, ordered my small equipage to be got ready; and, to animate me the more to seek occasions of acquiring glory, he represented to me, that the career of honour was open to every body, and that in war, I might obtain a name the more glorious, as I should owe it to myself alone. At the same time, he revealed the secret of my birth, which he had hitherto concealed from my knowledge. As I passed for his son in Madrid, and effectually believed myself to be so, I own this piece of information gave me a good deal of pain: I could not then, nor cannot now, think of it without shame; for the more my sentiments seemed to argue me of a noble origin, the greater my confusion was to see myself abandoned by those who gave me being.

I went to serve in the Low Countries, but the peace being concluded soon after, and Spain rid of her enemies, though not of those who envied her prosperity, I returned to Madrid, where I received fresh marks of tenderness from the baron and his lady. About two months after my return, a little page came into my room one morning, and presented to me a billet, conceived pretty nearly in these words;

" I am

"I am neither ugly, nor ill-shaped, and yet you see me frequently at the window, without paying homage with your eyes. This behaviour but ill answers your gallant appearance; and piques me so much, that I wish I could inspire you with love, to be revenged on your indifference."

Having read this billet, I did not doubt that it came from a widow called Leonora, who lived opposite to our house, and had the reputation of being very coquettish. I interrogated the page, who was on the reserve at first, but in consideration of a ducat which I slipped into his hand, he satisfied my curiosity; and even undertook to carry an answer, by which I informed his mistress, that I acknowledged my crime, and was already sensible of her being more than half revenged.

I was not at all insensible of this kind of conquest: I kept the house all that day, and took great care to be always at the window, that I might observe the lady, who did not forget to shew herself at hers. I made love to her in dumb shew, she answered my signals, and next morning let me know by her page, that if I would be in the street betwixt eleven and twelve at night, I might converse with her at a parlour window. Though I did not find myself very much in love with such a forward widow, I did not fail to return a very passionate answer, and to wait for night with as much impatience as if I had been violently smitten. In the evening, I went out, to walk in the Prado till the hour of assignation; and was no sooner arrived at that place, than a man mounted on a fine horse alighted hard by me, and accosting me hastily, said, "Are not you the son of Baron Steinbach?" When I replied in the affirmative, "You are the person, said he, who intend to converse with Leonora at her window. Her page has shewn me her letters, and your answers, and I have followed you this evening from your own house hither, to let you know that you have a rival whose pride is very much

much mortified in being obliged to dispute a heart with such a one as you. I believe I need say no more; we are now in a private place. Let us draw therefore, unless, to avoid the chastisement I prepare for you, you will promise to break off all correspondence with Leonora. You must either sacrifice to me the hopes you have conceived, or forfeit your life immediately." "You ought then, said I to him, to have requested, not demanded that sacrifice; I might, perhaps, have granted it to your entreaty, but I refuse it to your threats."

"'Tis very well, he replied, after having tied his horse to a tree, draw then: it does not become a person of my quality to stoop so low as to intreat a man of your station: most people of my rank, in the same case, would have revenged themselves in a less honourable way." I was shocked with these last words, and seeing his sword already unsheathed, drew mine also: we attacked one another with such fury, that the combat did not last long: whether he behaved with too much heat, or I had more skill, I know not, but I gave him a mortal thrust, upon which I saw him stagger and fall. Whereupon, minding my own safety only, I mounted his horse, and took the road to Toledo. I durst not return to the Baron's house, being well assured that my adventure would very much afflict him; and when I considered the danger in which I was, I thought I could not get out of Madrid too soon.

In the midst of the most melancholy reflections, I rode the remaining part of the night, and all the morning; but towards noon, was obliged to halt in order to give my horse some rest, and avoid the heat of the day which grew insupportable. I tarried therefore, in a village, till sun-set, after which I continued my journey, resolving to make but one stage to Toledo. I had got two leagues beyond Illescas, when, towards midnight, I was surprized in the middle of a field, with just such another storm as fell to-day;

day; upon which I drew near the wall of a garden that I perceived at the distance of a few paces, and not finding a more convenient shelter, stood with my horse as close as I could to the door of a summer-house situated at the end of the wall, over which there was a balcony. As I leaned against the door, I perceived it open, which I ascribed to the negligence of servants; and alighting, less out of curiosity than for the sake of being better screened from the rain, which did not fail to incommode me while I remained under the balcony, I entered the ground-floor of the summer-house with my horse, which I led by the bridle.

I employed myself during the tempest, in observing the place, and though I could distinguish nothing but by the lightning which flashed around, it was easy to perceive that the house could not belong to a vulgar owner. I expected still that the rain would cease, intending to proceed on my journey; but a great light that I observed at a distance made me change my resolution. Leaving my horse in the summer-house, the door of which I took care to secure, I advanced towards the light, persuaded that there was still somebody in the house, not yet gone to bed, and resolved to desire lodging for that night. Having crossed several walks, I arrived at a saloon, the door of which I found open also; I entered it, and when I had observed all the magnificence of the place, by the light of a fine crystal branch, I no longer doubted that I was in the house of some rich nobleman. The pavement was of marble, the wainscot very handsome, and curiously gilt, the cornices of admirable workmanship, and the ceiling painted by the most skilful masters; but what I took particular notice of, was an infinite number of busts of Spanish heroes supported on pedestals of jasper, all round the saloon. I had leisure enough to consider all these things, for though I listened attentively from time to time,

time, I neither heard the least noise, nor saw a living creature appear.

There being on one side of the saloon a door unbolted, I half opened it, and perceived a range of rooms, the last of which only was lighted.—“What shall I do? said I to myself, shall I return, or boldly penetrate to that room?” I concluded that the most judicious step would be to return as I came. But I could not resist my curiosity, or rather the force of destiny that dragged me along: I advanced from one room to another, until I arrived at that in which was the light, that is, a taper burning on a marble table, in a silver candlestick gilt. I at first observed very handsome and gay summer furniture, but in a little time casting my eyes upon a bed the curtains of which were half drawn on account of the heat, I saw an object that attracted my whole attention. This was a young lady, who, notwithstanding the noise of the thunder, lay in a profound sleep. I approached her softly, and by the light of a taper discovered a complexion and features that quite dazzled me. My heart took the alarm at the sight! I felt my soul smitten and transported: but whatever emotions agitated my breast, the opinion which I had of her high rank, hindered me from entertaining the least rash thought, and respect prevailed over inclination.

While I glugged myself with the pleasure of contemplating her beauty, she awoke; and you may guess what was her surprize when she saw a man whom she did not know in her bed chamber at midnight. She trembled when she perceived me, and shrieked aloud; while I endeavoured to remove her fear, by kneeling before her and saying, “Madam, be not afraid: I come not here to do you the least injury.” I was going on, but her consternation was such that she did not hear me. She called her women several times, but nobody answering, she put on a thin night gown which lay at the bed’s feet, got up

hastily

hast
still
und
app
ing
men
nob
have
to f
pres
and
ente
had
sum
heav
So
the
maie
had
pear
said,
wret
not
the f
assoc
have
answ
I kn
and
am a
hath
that
had
Judg
stead
you
veng
whic
who

hastily, and went into the rooms that I had crossed, still calling her maids and a younger sister who lived under her care. I expected to see all her servants appear, and had reason to apprehend that without being heard, I should meet with very disagreeable treatment; but luckily for me, she called to no purpose; nobody came but an old domestic, who could not have given her much assistance, had she had any thing to fear. Nevertheless, growing more resolute by his presence, she asked with a haughty air, who I was, and how and for what reason I had the boldness to enter her house. I then began to justify myself, and had no sooner told her that I found the door of the summer-house open, than she exclaimed, "Just heaven! what do I presage!"

So saying, she seized the light, and searching all the rooms one after another, could see neither her maids, nor her sister, but even observed that they had carried off all their baggage. Her suspicions appearing now but too plain, she returned to me, and said, with a great deal of emotion, "Perfidious wretch! add not dissimulation to treachery. It was not chance that brought thee here. Thou art one of the followers of Don Fernando de Leyva, and an associate in his crime: but do'nt think to escape, I have still people enow to secure thee." "Madam, answered I, do not confound me with your enemies. I know no such person as Don Fernando de Leyva, and am even ignorant of your name and quality. I am an unfortunate man, whom an affair of honour hath obliged to leave Madrid; and I swear by all that is sacred, I would not have entered your house, had it not been for the storm that surprized me! Judge, therefore, more favourably of me, and instead of believing me an accomplice in the outrage you have suffered, think me rather disposed to revenge it." These last words, and the tone with which they were pronounced, appeased the lady, who seemed to look upon me no longer as her enemy:

but if her indignation vanished, it was only to make room for her grief. She wept bitterly; I was melted by her tears, and no less afflicted than she, although I did not know the cause of her sorrow. I not only wept with her, but impatient to revenge her wrongs, was seized with a transport of fury. "Madam, cried I, what injury have you received? Speak, I espouse your resentment. Shall I pursue Don Fernando, and stab him to the heart? Name all those whom you would have sacrificed. Command my service. Whatever dangers, whatever misfortunes may be attached to your vengeance, that stranger whom you thought confederate with your enemies, will tempt them all, for your sake."

This transport surprized the lady, and stopt the course of her tears: "Ah, Sir! said she, pardon my suspicion, on account of the cruel situation in which I am. These generous sentiments have undeceived Seraphina, and even freed me from the shame of seeing a stranger witness to the affront put upon my family.—Yes, generous unknown! I acknowledge my error, and am far from rejecting your assistance; but I ask not the death of Don Fernando."—"Well, madam, I replied, what services can you expect of me?"—"Sir, answered Seraphina, the cause of my complaint is this: Don Fernando de Leyva is in love with my sister Julia, whom he saw by accident at Toledo, where we usually live.—Three months ago he asked her in marriage of the Count de Polan, my father, who refused his consent, on account of an old enmity subsisting between our families.—My sister, not yet fifteen years of age, must have been weak enough to follow the advice of my women, whom Don Fernando has, doubtless, bribed to his interest: and he, informed of our being by ourselves in this country-house, has taken this opportunity of carrying her off—I want therefore to know what retreat he has chosen for her, that my father and brother, who have been at Madrid these two months,

may

may
of G
trav
maki
famil
your.

Th
which
circu
Castil
make
me?
neces

accep

and p
and 2

der t

Serap
for th

she Q

went
by th

ceive
the m

servin

imagi
thoug

grow

some

bring
shoul

would

Do

story
pardo

upon
you.

are fa
know

may take their measures accordingly. In the name of God! added she, give yourself the trouble of traversing the neighbourhood of Toledo, and of making an exact enquiry about the ravisher:—my family will be eternally indebted to you for the favour."

The lady did not consider, that the employment which she prescribed for me but ill agreed with the circumstances of a man who could not get out of Castile too soon.—But how was it possible for her to make this reflection, which did not even occur to me? Charmed with the happiness of finding myself necessary to the most amiable person in the world, I accepted the commission with a transport of joy, and promised to acquit myself with equal diligence and zeal. In effect, I did not wait for day, in order to go and accomplish my promise; but quitted Seraphina on the instant, conjuring her to pardon me for the fright I had occasioned, and assuring her that she should hear news of me in a very little time.—I went out as I had come in; but so much engrossed by the lady, that it was not difficult for me to perceive I was already captivated by her beauty: I was the more confirmed in this, by the eagerness I felt in serving her, and the amorous chimeras which my imagination produced.—I fancied that Seraphina, although possessed by her sorrow, had observed my growing passion, and beheld it perhaps not without some pleasure: I even imagined, that if I could bring her any news of her sister, and the affair should turn out according to her wish, the whole would redound to my honour.

Don Alphonso, interrupting the thread of his story in this place, said to the old hermit, "I beg pardon, father, if, too full of my passion, I enlarge upon circumstances, which are, doubtless, tedious to you." "No, my son, replied the anchorite, they are far from being tedious: I am even pleased to know how far you are smitten by this young lady

of whom you talk, that I may regulate my advice accordingly."

"My imagination, heated by these flattering ideas, resumed the young man, I searched two days for Julia's ravisher: but it was to no purpose for me to make all imaginable enquiry: I could not discover the least traces of him. Very much mortified at having reaped no fruit from my researches, I returned to Seraphina, whom I expected to find in the utmost anxiety: but she was much more tranquil than I imagined, and informed me that she had been more lucky than I; that she knew what was become of her sister, having received a letter from Don Fernando himself, importing, that being privately married to Julia, he had placed her in a convent at Toledo. "I have sent his letter to my father, added Seraphina. I hope the affair will terminate in an amicable manner, and that a solemn marriage will in a short time extinguish the hatred which has so long divided our families.

When the lady had made me acquainted with her sister's fate, she made an apology for the trouble she had given me, and the danger to which she might have imprudently exposed me, by engaging me to pursue a ravisher, without remembering that I had told her I was obliged to fly, on account of an affair of honour:—she excused herself therefore in the most obliging terms, and as I had need of rest, carried me into the saloon, where we sat down together. —She wore a loose gown of white taffety with black stripes, and a little hat of the same stuff, with a black plume of feathers, which made me guess that she was a widow; though she appeared so young, that I did not know what to think of her condition.

If I longed for an explanation on this head, she was no less desirous of knowing who I was; accordingly, begged that I would tell her my name, not doubting, as she said, that by my noble air, and still more the generous pity that made me enter so warmly
into

into her interests, I belonged to some considerable family.—The question embarrassed me not a little : I blushed, was confounded, and own, that being less ashamed to lie than to tell the truth, I answered, I was the son of the Baron de Steinbach, an officer of the German guards. “ Tell me, likewise, replied the lady, for what reason you quitted Madrid : I offer you, beforehand, all the credit of my father, as well as of my brother Don Gaspard : that is the least mark of gratitude I can shew to a gentleman, who neglected the care of his own life to serve me. I made no difficulty of reconnting to her all the circumstances of my duel : upon which she blamed the gentleman whom I had slain, and promised to interest her whole family in my favour.”

When I had satisfied her curiosity, I begged her to gratify mine, and asked whether her faith was free or plighted. “ Three years ago, she replied, my father obliged me to marry Don Diego de Lara, and I have been a widow fifteen months.” — “ Madam, said I, what misfortune has deprived you of your husband so soon.” “ I will tell you, Sir, resumed the lady, in return for the confidence you have reposed in me.

“ Don Diego de Lara was a very genteel cavalier ; but though he entertained the most violent passion for me, and, in order to please me, put in practice, every day, all that the most tender and passionate lover could invent, to make himself agreeable to the object of his flame ; though he possessed a thousand good qualities, he could never touch my heart. Love is not always the effect of assiduities and distinguished merit—Alas ! added she, an utter stranger often enchants us at first sight. Well, it was not in my power to love him : more confounded than charmed with the tokens of his tenderness, to which I was forced to make returns without inclination ; though I, in secret, taxed myself with ingratitude, I likewise found my own situation very unhappy—Unluckily for him,

as well as me, his delicacy was still greater than his love. He discovered in my actions and discourse the most secret emotions of my breast, and dived to the very bottom of my soul. He complained incessantly of my indifference, and deemed himself the more unhappy in being unable to please me, because he very well knew that there was no rival in his way; for I was scarce sixteen years old, and, before he offered me his hand, he had gained over all my women, who assured him that no man had as yet attracted my regard—"Yes, Seraphina, he would often say, I wish you had been prepossessed in favour of another, and that alone were the cause of your indifference to me: my assiduities, and your own virtue would triumph over that prejudice; but I despair of making a conquest of your heart, since it remains untouched by all the love I have shewn." Tired with hearing him repeat the same discourse, I told him, that, instead of troubling his repose and mine by too much delicacy, he would do well to leave his grievances to time. And truly, one of my age was not capable of relishing the refinements of such a delicate passion; so that Don Diego ought to have taken my advice. But seeing a whole year elapsed, without his being farther advanced than the first day, he lost his patience, or rather his reason: and pretending to have an affair of consequence at court, departed to serve as a volunteer in the Low Countries, where he soon found in battle that which he went to seek: I mean the end of his torments and life."

After the lady had favoured me with this relation, the singular character of her husband became the subject of our discourse; in which we were interrupted by the arrival of a courier, who delivered to Seraphina a letter from the Count de Polan.—She asked my permission to read it, and I observed, that while she perused it, she grew pale, and trembled. After having read it, she lifted up her eyes to heaven, heaved a profound sigh, and her face was in a mo-

ment

ment covered with tears. I was greatly disturbed; and, as if I had presaged the cruel stroke I was to suffer, felt myself chilled with a mortal fear. "Madam, said I with a faltering voice, may I ask what are the fatal contents of that letter." "There, Sir, replied Seraphina in a melancholy manner, giving me the paper, read yourself what my father writes. Alas! you are but too much concerned."

I was confounded at her words, and, trembling while I took the letter, read,

"YOUR brother Don Gaspard fought yesterday in the Prado*, where he received a mortal thrust, of which he died this day; having declared in his last moments, that the person who killed him is the son of Baron de Steinbach, an officer of the German guards.—What adds to the misfortune is, that the murderer has escaped me by flight: but wheresoever he conceals himself, I shall spare no pains to find him out; for which purpose I will write to some governors, who will not fail to apprehend him, if he passes through the towns of their jurisdiction; and by letters directed to other people, I will cause all the roads to be blocked up.

The Count de Polan."

You may easily conceive how all my faculties were disordered by this billet. I remained for some moments without motion or power of speech; and even in the midst of this depression, perceiving what a fatal obstruction the death of Don Gaspard would be to my love, was seized with the most violent despair! I threw myself at the feet of Seraphina, and presenting my naked sword, "Madam, said I, spare the Count of Polan the trouble of finding out a man who might conceal himself from his resentment. Revenge your brother, by sacrificing his murderer

* Prado, which signifies a meadow, is the publick walk at Madrid, as the Park is at London.

with your own hand—Strike, Madam, and let the same sword that deprived him of life, become fatal to his unfortunate adversary.” “Sir, replied Seraphina, affected with my behaviour, I loved Don Gaspard; therefore, although you killed him honourably, and he brought his misfortune upon himself, you may be assured I enter into the resentment of my father. Yes, Don Alphonso, I am your enemy, and will act against you every thing that the ties of blood and friendship can require: but I will not take the advantage of your bad fortune, which has put you in my power—The same honour that arms me against you hinders me from taking a base revenge. The rights of hospitality ought to be inviolable, and therefore I will not repay the service you have done me, with the conduct of an assassin.—Fly, then; elude, if you can, our pursuit and the rigour of the laws, and save your life from the danger that threatens it.”

“How, Madam! I replied, when you can revenge yourself, do you leave it to the laws, which may perhaps baulk your resentment? Ah, rather pierce the heart of a miserable wretch, who does not deserve your forbearance! No, Madam, do not honour me with such a noble and generous proceeding.—You know not who I am: tho’ I pass in Madrid for the son of the Baron de Steinbach, I am no other than an unfortunate foundling, whom he has brought up, out of pure compassion: I do not even know the authors of my being.” “No matter, said Seraphina, interrupting me with precipitation, as if my last words had given her new pain, were you the lowest of mankind I will do what honour prescribes.” “Well, Madam, said I, since the death of a brother cannot provoke you to shed my blood, I will incense you by a new crime; the audacity of which I hope you will not excuse.—I adore you—I could not behold your charms without being dazzled with them; and, in spite of the obscurity of my fate, had entertained the hope

hope of making you mine for ever. I was so much in love, or rather so vain, as to flatter myself that heaven, which perhaps favours me by keeping my origin concealed, would disclose it to me one day, when I should be able to tell you my name, without a blush.—After this confession, which injures you so much, do you still hesitate in punishing me?" "This rash declaration, replied the lady, would, doubtless, offend me at another time; but I pardon it, in consideration of your present agitation; besides, my own anxiety will not permit me to attend to such discourse. Once more, Don Alphonso, added she, shedding some tears, leave this place—fly from a house you have filled with sorrow; for every moment you stay increases my affliction." "Madam, I will no longer resist, said L, rising; I must banish myself from you; but think not that, studious of preserving a life which is odious to you, I will go and seek an asylum where I can be secure.—No, no, I devote myself to your resentment.—I will go to Toledo, wait with impatience for the fate you decree, and exposing myself to your pursuit, advance willingly towards the end of my misfortunes."

So saying, I withdrew: my horse was brought out for me, and I repaired to Toledo *, where I staid a whole week; and truly was at so little pains to conceal myself, that I don't know how I escaped being taken; for I cannot believe that the Count de Polan, whose chief care was to shut up all the passages against me, would imagine that I could not pass thro' Toledo.—In fine, I yesterday left that city, where I seem-

* Toledo, situated on the Tagus, is the capital of New Castile, the seat of an archbishop, primate of all Spain: it was formerly famous for a circus, capable of containing 150,000 people. There is a great manufacture of silk and wollen stuffs in this city; in which too, are made the best blades in the world: whence a good sword is frequently called a Toledo.

ed to be tired of liberty ; and without keeping any certain road, am come to this hermitage, like a man who has nothing to fear.—You see, father, what engrosses my thoughts, and I crave the assistance of your advice.”

C H A P. XI.

The old hermit discovers himself, and Gil Blas perceives that he is among his acquaintance.

ALphonso having ended the melancholy narration of his misfortunes, the old hermit said to him, “ Son, you have been very imprudent in staying so long at Toledo. I look upon all you have recounted in a light very different from that in which you see it, and your passion for Seraphina is, in my opinion, pure madness. Believe me, you must forget that young lady, who cannot possibly be yours.—Yield therefore, with a good grace, to the obstacles that separate you from her, and follow your destiny, which, in all likelihood, will be productive of many other adventures.—You will, questionless, find some other young lady, who will make the same impression upon your heart, and whose brother you have not slain.”

He was going to add a great many other things, in order to exhort Don Alphonso to have patience, when we saw another hermit, loaded with a wallet well stuffed, enter the hermitage. He was come from the town of Cuenca, where he had made a very successful gathering ; seemed younger than his companion, and wore a red bushy beard. “ Welcome, brother Antonio, said the old anchorite to him : what news from town ? ” “ Bad enough, answered the red-haired brother, putting a letter in his hand : that billet will inform you.” The senior, having opened and read it with suitable attention, cried, “ God be praised ! since the plot is discovered, we must regulate our conduct accordingly. Let us change our style, added he,

he. Signior Don Alphonso, you see a man exposed, like yourself, to the caprice of fortune. I am informed from Cuenca, which is a town about a league from this, that somebody has done me an ill office with justice : all the agents of which are to set out to-morrow for this hermitage, in order to secure my person ; but they shan't find the hare in the gin.—This is not the first time that I have been in such dilemmas. Thank God, I have almost always extricated myself like a man of genius. I will now shew myself in another shape ; for such as you see me, I am neither an old man nor a hermit.”

So saying, he stripped himself of a long robe which he wore, and appeared in a doublet of black serge with slashed sleeves. Then he pulled off his cap, untied a string that supported his false beard, and, all of a sudden, assumed the figure of a man between twenty and thirty years of age. Brother Anthony, by his example, quitted his hermit's habit, rid himself of his red beard in the same manner as his companion had done, and took out of an old worm-eaten coffer a shabby short cassock, with which he cloathed himself.—But you may guess my surprize, when in the person of the old anchorite I recollected Signior Don Raphael ; and in that of brother Antony, my most dear and faithful valet Ambrose de Lamela !—Good God ! cried I immediately, I find I am among my acquaintance here.”—“ True, Signior Gil Blas, said Raphael smiling, you have found two of your friends when you least expected it. I confess you have some reason to complain of us ; but let us forget what is past, and thank heaven for our meeting again. Ambrose and I make a tender of our services ; and I can tell you, they are not to be despised. You must not think us the worst of mankind : we neither assault nor assassinate : we seek only to live at the expence of our neighbours ; and if theft be a crime, necessity excuses the injustice. Associate with us, and lead a rambling life, which is extremely agreeable,

when conducted with prudence : not but, with all our sagacity, the chain of second causes is sometimes such, that we meet with unlucky adventures. What then ! we enjoy the good with the better relish on that very account.—We are hardened against inconstant weather, and accustomed to the vicissitudes of fortune ”

“ Signor cavalier, added the false hermit, speaking to Don Alphonso, we make the same proposal to you, which, considering your present situation, I think you ought not to reject ; for, not to mention the affair that obliges you to conceal yourself, you must certainly be in want of money.” Yes, truly, said Don Alphonso, and that, I own, increases my chagrin.”—“ Well then, replied Raphael, don’t leave us : You cannot do better than to join your fortune to ours : You shall want nothing ; and we will baffle all the search of your enemies. We know almost every inch of Spain, having travelled over it ; and are acquainted with the woods, mountains, and every place proper for an asylum against the brutality of justice.” Don Alphonso thanked them for their good will, and being actually without money or resource, resolved to bear them company. I came to the same determination, because I would not leave the young gentleman, for whom I felt a growing friendship.

Having agreed to go all together, we began to deliberate whether we should set out that instant, or, first of all, give some assaults to a bottle full of excellent wine, which brother Antony, the day before, had brought from Cuenca : but Raphael, as a man of the greatest experience among us, represented that, before every thing else, we must think of our safety. He was of opinion, therefore, that we should march all night, in order to gain a very thick wood between Villardeña and Almodabar, in which we should halt, and, being perfectly secure, spend the day in taking

our

our repose. This advice being approved, the false hermits made two bundles of their baggage and provisions, and laid them in æquilibrium on Don Alphonso's horse.—This was done with great expedition; after which we quitted the hermitage, leaving as a prey to justice the two hermit-ropes, with the white and red beards, two pallats, a table, a rotten chest, two old straw-bottom'd chairs, and the image of St. Pacomo.

We walked all night, and began to feel ourselves very much fatigued, when, at day-break, we perceived the wood to which we were bound. The sight of a port gives new vigour to sailors tired with a long voyage.—We accordingly took courage, and at last arrived at the end of our journey before sun rise. Penetrating into the thickest part of the wood, we stopt at a very agreeable spot upon a small glade, surrounded with a good many tall oaks; the branches of which meeting, formed an umbrageous arch, impervious to the heat of the day. Here we unbridled the horse to let him feed, after we had unloaded him, and sitting down together, took out of brother Antony's wallet some large pieces of bread, with a good many slices of roasted meat, and began to attack them as if for a wager. Nevertheless, in spite of our appetites, we often left off eating to embrace the bottle, which incessantly circulated, passing from the clasp of one into the embraces of another.

Towards the end of the repast, Don Raphael said to Don Alphonso, "Signior cavalier, after the confidence you have honoured me with, it is but just, that I recount to you the history of my life, with the same sincerity." "It will give me great pleasure," replied the young man. "And me in particular, cried I; for I have an extreme curiosity to hear your adventures, which are, doubtless, well worth our attention." "That I'll answer for, replied Raphael; and I intend to commit them to writing one day.—That shall be the amusement of my old age; for I
am

am still young, and would have the volumes enlarged; but at present we are fatigued. Let us refresh ourselves with a few hours of sleep: while we three enjoy our rest, Ambrose will watch against all surprize, and then sleep in his turn. Though I believe we are very safe in this place, it is always good to be upon our guard." So saying, he stretched himself upon the grass, Don Alphonso did the same, I followed their example, and Lamela stood sentry.

Don Alphonso, instead of taking some repose, kept himself awake with reflecting upon his misfortunes; and I could not close an eye. As for Don Raphael, he soon fell asleep; but awakening an hour after, and seeing us disposed to listen, he said to Lamela, "Friend Ambrose, thou may'st now take a comfortable nap." "No, no, replied Lamela, I have no inclination to sleep; and though I am well acquainted with all the passages of your life, they are so instructive for people of our profession, that I shall be very well entertained in hearing them recounted once more." Don Raphael immediately began the history of his life in these terms.

BOOK V.

CHAP. I.

The History of Don Raphael.

I AM the son of an actress at Madrid, whose name was Lucinda, famous for her theatrical talents, and still more for her gallantry. As for my father, I cannot without presumption, assume any one in particular. 'Tis true I might tell what man of quality

ty was in love with my mother when I came into the world; but that epocha would be by no means a convincing proof of his being the author of my birth. A woman of my mother's profession is so little to be trusted, that even while she appears the most attached to one nobleman, she almost always substitutes in his place some other for his money.

There's nothing like putting one's self above scandal: Lucinda, instead of bringing me up in obscurity at her own house, took me by the hand, without ceremony, and carried me to the theatre in a very honourable manner, without giving herself any trouble about the discourse that passed at her expence, or the malicious sneers that the sight of me never failed to excite.—In a word, I was her darling, and caressed by all the men that visited her, so much, that it looked as if nature pleaded with them in my behalf.

I was allowed to pass the twelve first years of my life in all sorts of frivolous amusements: scarce was I taught to read and write; and still less pains were taken to initiate me in the principles of my religion; I learned only to dance, sing, and play upon the guitar.—This was all I could do, when the Marquis de Leganez asked me as a companion to his only son, who was pretty much of my age. Lucinda willingly complied with his request, and it was then I began to think seriously. Young Leganez was not farther advanced than I: that little nobleman did not seem qualified by nature for the sciences. He hardly knew one letter of his alphabet, although he had been under the instruction of a preceptor fifteen months.—His other masters succeeded no better: he exhausted their patience. They were not, indeed permitted to use rigour; but expressly ordered to instruct, without tormenting him; and that order, joined to his natural dullness, rendered all their lessons of little or no effect.

But the preceptor invented an excellent expedient to intimidate the young nobleman, without contradicting

dicting his father's order. He resolved to flog me, when his pupil deserved punishment : and he did not fail to put his resolution in practice. Not relishing this expedient, I ran away, and complained to my mother of such unjust treatment ; but, in spite of all her tenderness for me, she had strength enough to resist my tears, and considering that it was a great advantage for her son to live with the marquis de Leganez, sent me back immediately. I was now abandoned to the preceptor, who perceiving that his invention had produced a good effect, continued to flog me still, instead of the young nobleman ; and, in order to make the deeper impression upon him, disciplined me with great severity. I was sure to pay every day for young Leganez ; and I may venture to affirm, that he did not learn one letter of the alphabet which did not cost me an hundred lashes. Judge you what his rudiments stood me in.

The birch was not the only disagreeable thing I suffered in this house ; as every body knew me, the meanest servant, even the scullions, reproached me with my birth. This disgusted me so much, that I ran away one day, after having found means to seize the preceptor's whole stock of ready money, which might amount to an hundred and fifty ducats. Such was the vengeance I took for the stripes he had so unjustly bestowed upon me. I performed this slight of hand with admirable dexterity, though it was my first essay ; and having had the address to baffle the search that was made for me during two days, left Madrid, and repaired to Toledo, without being pursued.

I was then just going into my fifteenth year. What a pleasure it was to be independent at that age, and entirely master of my own actions ! I soon contracted acquaintance with young people, who polished me up, and assisted me to spend my ducats ; I associated with knights of the post, who cultivated my happy disposition so well, that in a little time, I became one of the most dextrous of the order. At the end of five years,

years, being seized with an inclination to travel, I quitted my confederates, and beginning my peregrinations by Estremadura, went as far as Alcantara: but before I reached that place, finding an opportunity of exerting my talents, I did not let it escape. Being a-foot, and moreover loaded with a pretty heavy knapsack, I frequently halted to repose myself under the trees, that offered me their shade, at a little distance from the highway. In one of these resting places, I found two lads very well dressed, talking merrily on the grass, while they enjoyed the coolness of the shade. I saluted them very courteously, and entered into conversation with them, at which they did not seem displeased. The eldest was not more than fifteen, and they seemed both to be extremely raw. "Signior cavalier, (said the youngest to me) we are sons of two rich citizens of Plazencia, who longing extremely to see the kingdom of Portugal, in order to satisfy our curiosity, have taken an hundred pistoles each from our parents: and as we travel a-foot, hope to go a great way with that sum. What is your opinion of the matter?" "If I had so much (I replied) God knows where I should go; I would visit the four corners of the world. What the devil! two hundred pistoles! 'tis an immense sum, and you'll never see the end of it. If it be agreeable to you gentlemen, (added I) I shall have the honour of accompanying you, as far as the city of Almeria, where I am going to take possession of the estate of an uncle, who has been settled in that place twenty years, or thereabouts."

The young citizens assured me, they would be glad of my company. Whereupon, having rested ourselves a little, we set forwards altogether, towards Alcantara, where we arrived a good while before night, and went to lodge at a good inn. We asked for a room, and were shewn into one, where there was a press with a key in it. Having bespoke supper, I proposed to my comrades, that we should go and see the town, while it was getting ready. They accepted the proposal,

we

we locked our knapsacks in the press, the key of which one of the citizens put in his pocket, and going out of the inn, went to view the churches. While we were in the cathedral, I pretended all of a sudden, to have an affair of consequence in hand, and said to my companions, "Gentlemen, I have just recollected, that a person of Toledo desired me to deliver a short message to a merchant, who lives near this church. Pray wait for me here, and I'll be back in an instant." So saying, I left them, ran to the inn, flew to the chest, forced the lock, and rummaging the knapsacks of my young cits, found their pistoles. Poor children! I did not leave them so much as one to pay for their night's lodging. I carried all off, quitted the town as fast as possible, and took the road to Merida, without giving myself any farther concern about them.

That adventure put me into a condition to travel agreeably: though I was young, I found myself capable of conducting myself with prudence; and I may say, I was pretty old, considering my years. Having resolved to buy a mule, I put my resolution in practice at the next village. I even converted my knapsack into a portmanteau, and began to assume a little more of the man of consequence. On the third day, I met a man singing vespers, as loud as he could roar, on the highway. Judging, by his appearance, that he was a chanter, I accosted him with courage, "Signior batchelor, you sing purely, your heart goes with your profession, I see." "Sir, (answered he) I am a chanter at your service, and amuse myself with clearing my pipes, as you hear."

In this manner we entered into conversation, and I perceived that I had got in company with a most witty and agreeable fellow, about four or five and twenty years old. As he travelled on foot, I made my mule walk slowly, that I might have the pleasure of conversing with him; and among other things, the discourse turning on Toledo, "I know that city perfectly

festly well, (said the chanter) having lived a good while in it, and I believe have some friends there."

"In what place (answered I, interrupting him) did you live at Toledo?" He replied, "In the new street. I lived with Don Vincent de Buena Gara, Don Matthias de Cordel, and two or three more gentlemen of honour: we lodged, eat, and passed our time agreeably together." These words surprized me; for it must be observed, that those gentlemen, whose names he mentioned, were the very sharpers with whom I had kept company at Toledo. "Signior Chanter (cried I) those gentlemen, whom you have named, are of my acquaintance, and I lived with them in the new street." "I understand you, (he replied, smiling) that is to say, you are entered in the company, since I left it three years ago. "I have (said I) quitted these gentlemen, because I was seized with an inclination to travel. I intend to make the tour of Spain; knowing that I shall improve by experience." "Without doubt (he replied) one must travel before he can have a finished education: it was for this reason that I left Toledo, where I lived very agreeably. I thank heaven (added he) for having met, when I least expected it, a knight of my own order. Let us join, travel together, make attempts on our neighbour's purse, and lay hold of every occasion that presents itself, of exerting our skill."

He made this proposal so frankly, and with such a good grace, that I accepted it. He won my confidence all of a sudden, in bestowing his upon me, and we unbosomed ourselves to one another. I recounted my history to him, and he made no mystery of his adventures to me: letting me know, that he was just come from Portalegro, whence an unsuccessful trick had obliged him to escape with precipitation, in the dress he now wore. After he had communicated to me his whole affairs, we resolved to go to Merida together, in order to try our fortune, by striking some lucky stroke, if possible; and then immediately

mediately decamping, to remove elsewhere. From that moment, our stock became common betwixt us; indeed Moralez (so my companion was called) was not in a very brilliant situation. His whole fortune consisted of five or six ducats, with some baggage that he carried in a wallet; but if I was richer than he, in ready money, he, on the other hand, was more consummate than I, in the art of deceiving mankind.

We mounted my mule by turns, and, in this manner, arriving at Merida, halted at an inn of the suburbs, where my comrade took out of his wallet a dress, in which he was no sooner cloathed, than we went to take a turn through the town, reconnoitre the ground, and look for an opportunity of going to work. We considered every object that presented itself, with great attention, and, as Homer would have said, resembled two kites that cast their eyes abroad, to look for birds on which to prey. In short, we waited, in hopes that chance would afford an occasion, on which we might employ our industry, when we perceived in the street, an old grey haired gentleman, fighting against three men, who pushed hard at him. I was shocked at the inequality of the combat, and, as I am naturally a tilter, flew to the assistance of the old man: Moralez following my example, we attacked the gentleman's three enemies, and obliged them to seek their safety in flight.

The senior was mighty thankful. "We are very glad (said I to him) that we happened to be here so seasonably, to give you assistance: but let us know, at least, who we have had the good fortune to serve; and pray tell us, for what reason those three men would have assassinated you." "Gentlemen (he replied) I am too much obliged to refuse the satisfaction you desire. My name is Jerome de Moyadas, and I live on my fortune in this city: one of those assassins from whom you have delivered me, made love to my daughter, asked her of me in marriage some days

ago; and as he could not obtain my consent, attacked me sword in hand, in order to be revenged." "And may one ask (I replied) your reason for refusing your consent to that gentleman?" "I will tell you (said he). I had a brother, a merchant in this city, whose name was Augustin; two months ago he was at Calatrava, and lodged at the house of Juan Velez de Menbrilla, his correspondent, with whom he was so intimate, that, in order to strengthen their friendship still more, he promised my only daughter Florentina in marriage to his son, not doubting that he had credit enough with me to perform his promise. Accordingly, my brother, upon his return to Merida, no sooner mentioned the affair, than I, out of love to him, consented to the marriage. He then sent Florentina's picture to Calatrava; but, alas! had not the satisfaction of finishing the work, for he died three weeks ago; conjuring me, on his death-bed, to dispose of my daughter to none but his correspondent's son. This I promised, and on this account refused Florentina to the gentleman who assaulted me, although he is a very advantageous match. I am a slave to my word, and every moment expect the son of Juan Velez de Menbrilla, on whom I will bestow my daughter in marriage, though I never saw either him or his father. I beg pardon, (continued Jerome de Moyadas) for troubling you with this relation; but you yourself exacted it of me."

I listened to him with great attention, and resolving upon a trick, that struck me in the head of a sudden, affected great astonishment, lifted up my eyes to heaven, and turning towards the old man, said, in a pathetic tone, "Ah, Signior Moyadas! is it possible, that on my first arrival at Merida, I should be so happy as to save the life of my father-in-law!" The old citizen was strangely surprized at these words, as well as Moralez, who shewed by his countenance, what a great rogue he took me to be.

"What

"What do I hear? (replied the senior) how I are you the son of my brother's correspondent?" "Yes, Signior Jerome de Moyadas, (answered I, with an audacious countenance, while I threw my arms about his neck) I am that happy mortal for whom the adorable Florentina is destined. But before I express my joy in entering into your family, allow me to shed into your bosom the tears which the remembrance of your brother Augustin renews! I should be the most ungrateful of all mankind, if I was not sensibly touched with the death of a person to whom I owe all the happiness of my life!" So saying, I again embraced honest Jerome, and covered my eyes with my hand, on pretence of wiping away my tears. Moralez, who, in a twinkling, perceived the advantage we might reap from a trick of this kind, did not fail to second the imposture, and passing for my valet, even topped me in the sorrow I had manifested for the death of Signior Augustin. "Monsieur Jerome, (cried he) what a loss you have suffered in your brother's death! he was such an honest man! the very phoenix of commerce, a disinterested merchant, a merchant of integrity; there are few of his fellows to be met with."

We had to do with a simple and credulous man, who, so far from suspecting the cheat, was himself an assistant in it. "And why (said he) did you not come straight to my house? you should not have gone to lodge at an inn: considering the terms on which we are, no ceremony ought to have been observed." "Sir, (answered Moralez, taking upon him to speak for me) my master is, I grant you, a little ceremonious: not but that he is excusable in some shape, in being unwilling to appear before you in his present situation: for we have been robbed on our journey hither, and lost all our baggage." "The young man (said I, interrupting him) tells you nothing but the truth, Signior de Moyadas. This misfortune did not permit me to come to your house: I

durst

durst not present myself in this garb, before the eyes of a mistress, who has not as yet seen me; and for that reason, I waited the return of a valet, whom I have sent to Calatrava." "This accident (replied the old man) ought not to have hindered you from coming to stay at my house, where I intend you shall immediately take up your lodging."

So saying, he carried me home with him; and by the way, we talked of the pretended robbery that I had suffered, when I assured him, that what gave me the greatest concern, was my having lost, with my baggage, the picture of Florentina. Whereupon the citizen observed, with a smile, that I must console myself for that loss, the more easily, as the original was better than the copy. In effect, as soon as we came to his house, he called his daughter, who was not above sixteen years of age, and might have been counted an accomplished young lady; saying to me, "You see the object which my late brother promised to you." "Ah, Signior! (cried I, with a passionate air) you have no occasion to tell me, that this is the amiable Florentina! these charming features are engraved on my memory, and still more upon my heart. If the picture which I lost, and which was only a slight sketch of such perfection, could inflame me with the most ardent passion, judge how I must be transported at this moment!" "You flatter me too much (said Florentina) for I am not vain enough to imagine that my qualifications justify your discourse." "Go on with your compliments," (said the father.) At the same time he let me alone with his daughter, and taking Moralez aside, "Friend, (said he to him) you have lost all your baggage then, and, without doubt, your money too." "Yes, Sir, (answered my comrade) a great number of banditti poured upon us, near Castil Blazo, and left us nothing but the cloaths on our backs; but we shall in a very short time receive bills of exchange, which will set all things to rights again.

But

“ But until those bills arrive (replied the old man, taking a purse out of his pocket) here are an hundred pistoles at your service.” “ O sir! (said Moralez) my master would not accept them for the world. I find you don’t know him. Zooks! he is a man of great delicacy on these occasions. He is none of those fashionable youngsters, who are apt to take up from every body. He does not love to be in debt, and would rather beg his bread than borrow one farthing.” “ So much the better (said the honest citizen) I esteem him the more on that account: I cannot bear to see young men contract debts: I pardon it indeed in people of quality; because it is a privilege they have possessed a long time. “ I won’t (continued he) affront thy master, and since it will only give him pain to offer him money, we must say no more about it.” With these words, he was going to put the purse in his pocket again, but my companion held his hand, saying, “ Hold, Signior Moyadas, whatever aversion my master has to borrowing, I don’t despair of prevailing upon him to accept your hundred pistoles. ’Tis only from strangers he is shy of borrowing: he is not so ceremonious with his own family: he can even demand of his father with a good grace, whatever money he has occasion for. The young gentleman, you perceive, knows how to distinguish persons, and ought to look upon you, Sir, as a father.”

5 AP 66

END of VOL. III.

Of the ADVENTURES of GIL BLAS.

n,
ed
z)
I
of
fe
m
nd
,"
m
see
co-
ve
af-
im
out
rfe
his
ver
air
red
or-
fa-
ood
The
tin-
as

